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JOSEPH HENRY THAYER

LATE PROFESSOR IN THE SCHOOL

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20 March 1902

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# APOLOGETICS :

## A COURSE OF LECTURES

BY  
*Revised*  
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Bequest of  
Prof. J. H. Thayer  
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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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THE pages of this book are drawn up from briefs and notes made by Professor Smith in preparation for his lectures on Apologetics, which were given in Union Theological Seminary in the years 1874-5 and 1875-6. The lectures referred to were the last work of this distinguished teacher, and consequently the little volume now sent forth exhibits his final judgment on the chief points in the conflict with unbelief. On this account it is believed that the outline of Apologetics which the following chapters present will be valued by all who knew the author. The projection of a work by him on a subject where he was an acknowledged master is likely to give intimations and clues which a complete volume by a less accomplished mind could not furnish.

The editor would say that he has strictly confined himself to giving forth what the author left. It has been necessary to make out some utterances from hints on scraps of paper which were originally meant to be reminders to the lecturer in the presence of his

class. But, with this exception, nothing has been added or changed. The fragment, as here issued, could have been made more symmetrical by including extracts from the author's manuscript lectures on the Introduction to Theology. But it has been thought best to give in this volume only the author's last survey of the field of debate between Christianity and its adversaries. Yet it will be observed that the work now presented relates to the three fundamental points of Apologetics, viz., the question of the *Supernatural* in its various aspects, the question, *Can God be known?* and the question of *Miracles*.\*

With regard to the prospects as to the publication of the lectures on theology, a word may perhaps be expected. The editor of this volume has carefully examined all that can be found of Professor Smith's preparations for his course in theology, and is of the opinion that a selection could be made which would secure to our lamented teacher a place of influence in American theology in some degree worthy of him. His estimates of the chief New England theologians, his strong grasp and masterly summary of the debates upon the Atonement, and the serene judgment which he maintained in the midst of the speculations of the ablest German

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\* *Evolution* also is discussed in APPENDIX III.

writers on the Person of Christ, could perhaps be fairly indicated in a volume such as we have in mind. If circumstances should permit, an outline of Professor Smith's theological system, with complete presentation of the lectures on the points named above, may, at no very distant day, be issued.

It should be added that Mr. William Allen Smith has kindly undertaken the revision of the proofs.

HARTFORD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,

*October, 1881.*

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# APOLOGETICS

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WITHIN the limits of these lectures it will not be practicable to go over all the ground which is indicated by this word. The attempt will rather be to lay out a general scheme, and to discuss some of the fundamental questions, especially the urgent ones of the present day. This branch of theology has been developed into a system only in recent times, and chiefly through the labors of German scholars. But the materials for it are found running through the whole history of the Church. There have always been apologies. The earliest Christian literature of the Church, especially the Western or Latin, was preëminently apologetic. The present Christian literature, in all civilized and Christian countries, takes on the same general character. The same questions about man, about each individual man, about the world—whence is it, what is it, for what is it—have always been agitated. They come up in new forms for each generation, and with them comes the necessity for renewed, honest, and patient investigation for every new age. The substance of the matter at

issue remains the same, but the forms of attack and the methods of defense constantly change.

Christianity has never been assailed so vigorously and persistently, and from so many sides, as now. Hence the special need of giving prominence to its grounds and reasons, to its establishment and defense. The whole of human civilization is bound up in the inquiry whether Christianity is to stand or fall. Its fall would be the most disastrous moral and spiritual wreck the world has ever known. Its victory in such a contest is to be the sublimest victory in the annals of time.

## CHAPTER I.

### THE SPHERE OF APOLOGETICS.—THE NATURE AND ELEMENTS OF THE CONFLICT.

THE term is derived from the old Greek word first used by Justin Martyr. Its significance is not only Defense against assault, but Vindication which is completed in the counter-attack and dislodgment of the adversary. In order to refute, Christian Apologetics must assail in turn. For the Christian faith, if it is anything, is everything, so far as man's highest interest and welfare are concerned. To define more sharply: Christian Apologetics is (1) Vindication against assault; (2) Vindication which establishes the truth of Christianity and shows the falsity and error of the opponents; *i. e.*, which not only defends Christianity but attacks its foes. (3) It is a scientific vindication. It vindicates in a scientific way, so as to include the apologies, so as to bring out the ultimate general principles in the case. (4) It gets from the whole course of conflict a brighter light in which to exhibit Christianity as the absolute religion.

The development of the race—the development of all truth—involves progress, but progress by and through conflicts, by antagonisms working out into a higher unity. The antagonisms with which we have

to do, the elements of the constant conflict in which Christianity advances, arise chiefly from the following sources :

1. The dualism between the Natural and the Supernatural. Is human life to be understood *sub specie mundi* alone, or *sub specie æterni* also? Infidelity tends to say this world is all. Its latest form makes the height of wisdom to be contentment with the present life. This element is in all infidelity. The question here is as to the Reality of the Supernatural.

2. The dualism between the Natural and the Spiritual. Is man essentially a body, or has he a spiritual essence, allying him with the Infinite and the Eternal? If he is a spirit, then he is a moral being; he is subject to a moral law, and may have an eternal destiny. Is there a dualism of Physical and Moral Law, or can the one be resolved into the other? Can mind be evolved from matter, and man from the brute?

3. The antagonism between Reason and Revelation, or Philosophy and Faith.

Both have their sphere and their rights. Both are necessary to man; neither is to be denied. Both, too, are employed essentially about the same fundamental questions—God, man, and the relation between them. Both run back into the mystery of the Infinite and the Eternal. The object of the contest has been to secure the sole sovereignty of the one or the other. The object of Apologetics must be to put them in their true relation, from the general point of view, that while Reason states the problems,

Revelation gives the true answer—the Ariadne's clue.

4. The antagonism between Sin and Holiness. Here we have a sliding scale, or a contrast. Everything in the contest which Apologetics has to meet centers here: Is sin a reality, an abnormal condition, or a stage of education, a process of development, a lesser good? Wherever sin is, there will be opposition to holiness. It is natural for sin to oppose holiness, and to deny a holy God.

The felt reality of sin is necessary to the possibility of redemption. Christianity is essentially a redemptive system. Incarnate love was crucified. A man with no sense of sin must oppose Christianity, in its doctrine of grace as well as of sin.

In this statement it is by no means asserted or implied that all objections to the Bible and Christianity are only the signs and manifestations of man's inborn and inbred corruption; that historical, philological, and doctrinal criticism come invariably from a sinful unbelief—still less, that when reason thinks and speaks, its utterances are to be set down to the account of a godless rationalism. Far from it. There are undeniable difficulties in respect to history and science which must be investigated. There are signs and wonders which would stagger any one, unless the need of them and their historic reality can be clearly evinced. Conscience and reason have their rights. Science has its lawful sphere. We are to prove (test, try) all things—even the Scriptures, even the doctrines of our faith—and hold fast that which is good.

If the Christian system cannot establish its claims and authority in the view of reason and conscience (their rights being carefully weighed and defined), it will be in vain for Church or Pope to call upon the nations to believe in their own infallible authority, as settling all questions of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, for time and for eternity. No; we are in the conflict, and it is only by going through it that we can get the victory.

5. The sense of sin and need of redemption lead to another contrast and point of conflict: that between the absolute revelation of *God in CHRIST*, and any and all other revelations of God to man, in nature, in history, and in other religions. Now, as in ancient times, the Christology of our system of faith is made prominent, both in the attack and in the defense. From the very necessity of the case there has been a revival of Christology. Christian realism, that which finds the reality of Christianity in the facts that center in the person and work of Christ, stands now in direct and fully developed opposition to the nescience and the nihilism, which must else be man's last word upon the vital question of his destiny.

6. This revelation in Christ is gathered up, says the Christian Church, in a final, inspired form in the canonical books of *the Old and New Testaments*; and these, of course, have always been a central object of attack and defense, entering largely, though not as exclusively as some suppose, into the decision of the great debate.

The full arguments on this point are exhibited in



the Introductions to the Old and New Testaments, or, rather, in a history of them, showing their genuineness, authenticity, and credibility. It is necessary to note here only the chief points of present attack.

(1) In respect to History: (a) Of the Old Testament, involving the palæontological and prehistoric discussions as to the primeval state of the world and of man, and archæological questions as to his progressive culture (Egypt, Assyria, Chaldæa, and ancient empires). (b) As to the New Testament, chiefly upon the question whether it is authentic, bringing under scrutiny the testimony as to the life and character of Christ, and as to the life and course of the Apostles (Strauss; Baur; Renan. The Gospels; Paul's Epistles; The Apocalypse). (2) In respect to Science (modern). Astronomy, Geology; the Origin and Unity of the Race; the Primeval History of Mankind. In all a bias of evolution.

7. The highest antagonism—that as to *the System of the Universe*. The fundamental question here is between Monism and Theism. Monism has two forms, the one asserting that all is God—Pantheism; the other, that all is matter—Materialism. Theism asserts a duality of the Infinite and the Finite, of the Creator and the Creature.

Is that which is Ultimate in Being an unconscious force—call it Matter or Spirit—or an Intelligent and Personal Power?

Is the Finite from the Infinite by emanation, or by the act of an Omnipotent and Wise Being?

Hence upon the question of the system of the

universe three theories in opposition to Christian Theism are advanced: Pantheism, Materialism, and Pantheistic Materialism (evolution \*).

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\* The power of evolution lies not in its details, but in its general theory.

## CHAPTER II.

### DIVISIONS OF APOLOGETICS.

#### § I. *General Divisions.*

OUR previous account of the elements and stages of this intense spiritual conflict between Christianity and its opponents—Christ and Anti-Christ—has indicated the general conclusion that all the lines and forces are concentrating upon three decisive questions: (*a*) a Personal God and his Moral Law and Government: (*b*) a Living Christ and his Redemptive Work: (*c*) the Christian System, Church, and Life as the highest and best form of Religion—the absolute Religion for man. Hence Apologetics embraces not only the person of Christ and his testimony, but also presupposes as a part of it a personal God and a moral government, and likewise has to do with what arises from and after Christ, the whole system radiating from him to bless and save the race.

The materials of which Apologetics must make use may perhaps be best distributed in the following general scheme:

FIRST: *Fundamental Apologetics*—comprising the questions embraced in Natural Theology—the Being and Nature of God and his relations to us; the spiritual and moral nature of man; with an examina-

tion of the Anti-Christian schemes of philosophy—materialistic, pantheistic, or mixed.

SECOND: *Historical Apologetics*, comprising the evidences of the divine origin and authority of the Christian faith.

THIRD: *Philosophical Apologetics*, taking its materials (1) from the Philosophy of Religion, proving by the history of religion, and a comparison of its various forms, that Christianity is the one absolute religion; (2) from the Philosophy of History, showing that Christianity is the key to the enigmas of man's destiny; (3) from the Nature (or Philosophy) of Christianity itself, especially as compared with philosophy in general: making it evident that Christianity as a system of truth is higher and better than any scheme of philosophy—is the sum of wisdom for the human race.

These main divisions given in the idea of Apologetics as a science correspond also to the forms which the assaults in our day are taking. These are: *first*, the theory of naturalistic development—that all things go on according to a fixed and necessary order, without the breaking forth at any point of a strictly creative power, or supermundane will. The *second* is, from the sphere of historical criticism, striving to show that the ancient documents of our faith, Jewish and Christian, will not stand the test of historical inquiry, but that both Jewish and Christian history must be reconstructed, according to the hypothesis of a simple development from lower to higher forms, involving of course, the elimination of all miraculous and prophetic elements. And the

*third* is, the presenting a system that is to be pantheistico-materialistic, which, it is claimed, is a more complete and satisfactory system for the race, meeting all their wants, than that which is given us in the Christian creed.

The main characteristic of the present attack upon, and defense of, Christianity is, that it is all along the line. Forces that have been gathering for centuries are concentrating simultaneously. Systems of science and philosophy hitherto at war have made peace with each other that they may attack the common foe, viz., Christianity. History, in its process of recovering all the records of the past, and of criticising the Biblical records, is in many quarters trying to undermine our historic basis: and many of the so-called philosophies of history and civilization attempt to explain the whole course of human history without God and Christ.\* The followers of Strauss and the school of Tübingen, and many critics of no special philosophical school, are ransacking early Christian and Pagan literature to disprove the Gospels and the Acts, and to explain the rise and growth of Christianity without supernaturalism. Almost all the sciences, in some of their representations, are constructing a theory of the earth and the heavens, of the origin and growth of all life, at war not only with the Scriptures, but also with the first principles of natural theology, of ethics, and of all rational psychology—scouting not only the dogmas of faith, but the very dictates of reason; rejecting not theol-

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\* See Buckle, Lecky, etc.

ogy alone, but all metaphysics; denying all final causes, all consciousness, all intelligence in the first cause of finite being, and leaving only a blind unconscious force as the source of an unconscious development, whereby everything is educed out of an inscrutable void in which all is to end. All efficient and final causes being denied, matter and force are feigned to produce vegetable and animal life and organisms; a blind principle of natural selection takes the place of creation by a law and a lawgiver; the soul is a mode of matter; thought is a secretion of the brain; the moral law is made by physical laws; ideas are generated out of sensations; immortality is true only of the race, and not of individuals; there is no hereafter for us—no judgment nor heaven nor hell; sin is a necessity, free-will a fiction, a personal God a subjective delusion.

Against these Christianity has to vindicate the reality of its revelation—the authority of its records—the completeness and harmony of its system—its superiority to any other system of truth in its individual doctrines—and its adaptation to man's needs, man's conscience, man's reason, and man's highest welfare. It has to show that it is the wisest and best system for man—the true wisdom. It is to do this, not by denying any truth of science or of reason, but by appropriating every such truth, and giving it its due place.

It is to show this comprehensively by proving that the true—

Philosophy of Religion leads to and rests in Christianity; and that the true—

Philosophy of all History can only be found in that which forms the center and head of Christianity, viz.,

That in the Person and Work and Church of the Incarnate God all the vital problems of Human Nature and Destiny find their best and only real solution—that Christianity is, in short, the one Absolute System of Truth.

Such a vindication of Christianity forms the scope of Apologetics.\*

§ 2. *Fuller Distribution of the Subject.*

FIRST DIVISION.—*Fundamental Apologetics. Pre-ambula Fidei*, or Rational Theology.

This comprises the essential truths of Religion and Ethics against the anti-religious schemes of speculation.

*Book A.*—The Underlying Religious Question. The Being and Nature of God as a Conscious Intelligence, personal and ethical, against anti-theistic and anti-religious theories: Materialism, Atheism, Pantheism. Or, the Being and Nature of God: with the arguments *a priori* and *a posteriori* against the objections of anti-theists. Here efficient and final causes are to be vindicated.

*Book B.*—The Cosmological Question. Creation by Fiat: its order and end.

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\* It is not to be expected that a complete vindication on all of these points will be brought within any one course, or be given by any one man. But this *scope* is forced on us by the present attitude of the subject and of infidelity, in its last forms and battles—the real battle of Armageddon and the true Anti-Christ.

Creation against anti-theistic Evolution and Development—as emanation—development by matter and motion.

Creation against the Infinite Series.

Successive Creations. There may be development and evolution as well as fiat.

*Book C.*—The Anthropological Question.

Man's nature—as spiritual or only material.

Relation of man to nature and the brutes that perish.

Man as free agent.

Man as a religious being, essentially made for worship. Chief end of man.

*Book D.*—The Ethical Question. (The aim and end of what is set forth in Books B and C is in that which is moral or spiritual. Nature and man have a moral and religious end, and can only so be understood.)

The Reality of the Moral Idea and of Moral Order.

1. In relation to the Divine Nature and Government.

2. In relation to Man—a being essentially moral—existing for moral ends.

*Infer*: Man as sinful, standing in conflict with the moral law and order, and needing salvation. All bearing on—

*Book E.*—The question of Man's Immortality. (Perhaps also *Book F.* The chief Anti-Theistic and Anti-Christian schemes of modern speculation in their relations to religion in general and Christianity in particular.)



SECOND DIVISION.—*Historical Apologetics.*—(This Division on historic grounds and the historic method, as the FIRST was on rational grounds.

The appeal is to certified Fact).

The proof on historical grounds of the Divine Origin and Authority of the Christian Faith.

*Book A.*—The Supernatural in History in general. Idea and Need of a Specific Revelation to solve the problems, left by what has gone before, of man as a moral being. Revelation and Inspiration.

*Book B.*—The Special Forms of the Supernatural in History. Especially—

1. In Prophecy—the Supernatural in Word.
2. In Miracle—the Supernatural in Act.

Place of Miracles in Evidences.

Truth proves Miracles, and converse.

Miracle and Natural Law.

*Book C.*—The Bible in History.

Its Inspiration, Unity, and Authority as a Record.

Its Testimony.

*Book D.*—Christ in History. The Supernatural in the Highest Personal Form and Authority. The Center of Testimony: the Source of the new Spiritual Life.

*Book E.*—The Church in History: its perpetual witness to the Truth; its world-wide Power; its beneficent Working.

THIRD DIVISION.—*Philosophical Apologetics.*—(Contents already sufficiently noted.)

*Book A.*—Philosophy of Religion.

*Book B.*—Philosophy of History.

*Book C.*—Philosophy of Christianity.

In sum : The general object is to give the full proof that Christianity is from God for man ; to defend the system and its record against philosophical speculation and criticism ; to appropriate all truth found elsewhere ; and to carry the war into the enemy's camp, by showing that Christianity is, as far as we know, the best and final system.

§ 3. *What is the place of Apologetics in the Encyclopædia of Theology ?*

This is a thoroughly German question.\*

Schleiermacher, Sack, and others assign it to the First or Philosophic part ; Hagenbach, to Dogmatics ; others, to Practical Theology, inasmuch as it leads to defense.

It is best to regard it as historico-philosophical Dogmatics. It is the whole contents and substance of the Christian faith, arrayed for defense and for (defensive) assault.

Each part of doctrine must have a rational side or relation, historical evidence, and an attitude of defense.

Hence, Apologetics is to be put, most conveniently, though not strictly, under Dogmatics.

There are special difficulties to be met under each head. Apologetics surveys the combined defense and assault of the whole, while details are treated under the subordinate divisions as these are unfolded.

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\* See APPENDIX II., Recent German Works on Apologetics.

## FIRST DIVISION.

FUNDAMENTAL APOLOGETICS.—*Preambula Fidei.**Rational Theology.*

Vindication of the Essential Truths of Religion and Ethics, against the Anti-Religious Schemes of Philosophical Speculation. God and Man, and their Relations on grounds of Reason and Conscience.

## CHAPTER I.

SUPERNATURALISM *vs.* ANTI-SUPERNATURALISM.

THE roots of Infidelity are doubtless in Sin and the consequent blindness of man to spiritual truth.

But it is equally true that, in discussion and in thought, there are certain theoretical positions about God, man, nature, and a future life, which prevent a believing acceptance of the religion of Christ: *i. e.* if thinking be *consistent*. For example: that all which we can know is the natural world (so called); that the infinite and supernatural are not objects of knowledge; that God cannot be known; that the knowledge of God, of the supernatural, is negative; that all knowledge is relative; that all science is about phenomena, external and sensible; that it is all generalized sensations; that the course of nature is uniform, unbroken—natural law being all; that the supernatural rests on credulity, blind faith.\*

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\* The subsoil of the Natural is in the Supernatural.

The subsoil of Anti-Supernaturalism is in the denial.

The particular objections to special truths and doctrines run back into this general denial of the supernatural, *e. g.* the whole criticism on prophecy, miracles, the incarnation.

*Order of the discussion.\**

- § 1. Nature (Idea) of the Supernatural *per se*.
- § 2. Real Being (Reality) of the Supernatural.
- § 3. Possibility of its Manifestation.
- § 4. Possibility of our knowing and testing this Manifestation. (The Proof of Manifestations coming subsequently. Here discussion only of the *a priori* possibility.)
- § 5. Objections.

§ I. *Nature (Idea) of the Supernatural.*

The idea of the supernatural is differently grasped and defined in different ages, and in different systems. Rude tribes find it in meteors, eclipses, portents and prodigies, ghosts and witches, the general idea being that of events which have a super-

\* The following scheme is also proposed :

- § 1. The Supernatural in its Eternal Being (Necessity).
- § 2. The Supernatural in the Possibility of its Manifestation.
- § 3. The Supernatural in its actual Manifestations in Historic Time.
  - (a.) The Creative Act (original transition from Infinite to Finite—Absolute to Relative). This must have occurred, as all concede.
    - Subordinate epochs of creation, new forces, etc.
    - These once introduced become a permanent order—the introduction is supernatural.
  - (b.) Especial Manifestation in Man and his Endowments.
  - (c.) In Revelation in General. Inspiration, Prophecy, Miracles.
  - (d.) The Incarnation.
  - (e.) The Church. Regeneration, Sanctification, and Final Victory.

human and super-mundane origin. In all its forms it involves a belief in the reality of such a *power*, controlling the world and human destiny. Examples: the Greek Fate above the gods; the East Indian Buddha; the American Indian's Great Spirit; the Creator, Incarnate God, worker of miracles of the Christian Faith: the Materialistic Fate; the Pantheistic Substance or Spirit. In all forms of faith, and almost all schemes of philosophy the supernatural is recognized, more or less dimly, more or less definitely.

In its highest and most abstract form of statement it is defined, in comparison and in contrast with what is called Nature—Naturalism.

By Nature is meant: the finite universe, with its constitution, order, and laws (which, it is supposed, can be detected and stated)—the finite, limited, dependent (interdependent) in a chain of effects and causes. Hence the so-called uniformity of nature.

(a.) Meaning of the Supernatural *per se*.

By the Supernatural, in contrast and comparison, is properly signified: what is before and above—in its being and nature independent of—Nature; the Absolute and Infinite; what is above the sequences (causes and effects) in Nature; what is the cause or source thereof; the substratum and *substantia* of Nature; standing under and producing, so that the natural has its ground in, and is caused by, the supernatural.\*

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\* *Natura haturans—natura naturata*, is the like distinction under the term Nature, which is here the equivalent of the Universe. But

(b.) Some, and Christian thinkers too, draw the line upon a different point. They embrace in the supernatural the human personality and will, all that is truly spiritual, all that is not included in the chain of causes and effects in the natural order. Man's will is supernatural, because it can break through and over the chain of causes and effects.

But the distinction here is not strictly between the Natural and the Supernatural, but between Physical Necessity and Moral Freedom, between Nature and Spirit. This view says, in effect, all that is *spiritual* is *supernatural*.

Dr. Bushnell defines the Supernatural,\* "whatever it be that is either not in the chain of natural cause and effect, or which acts on the chain of causes and effects, in nature, from without the chain."

Dr. Hickok, on the Valid Being of the Soul,† says, "the facts of a comprehending—not merely conjoining, nor connecting—power over nature, and of an ethical experience, prove the soul to be supernatural."

*Remarks and Criticisms on the Soul as Supernatural.*

1. The statements given in evidence establish the valid being of the soul, as free and moral—above the

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it is better to say, the universe is the whole, divided into the Intelligible and the Material, the Ideal and the Natural, the *Supernatural* and the *Natural*. This is the most comprehensive view and the fairest statement of the case. Spinoza's division of the "universe" into the productive and the produced is right, if the meaning of terms is kept in view, but confusion results from making "nature" the equivalent of all being.

\* Nature and the Supernatural, p. 37.

† In Rational Psychology, pp. 540, 541.

control of physical necessity—of *cause and effect* as seen and found in physical sequences. So much is valid and valuable. Will, personality, free spirit, cannot be explained by the laws of the physical creation, in terms of matter, force, and motion.

2. The implication or tacit assertion that the supernatural and the spiritual are identical—that all which is truly spiritual is also supernatural—that moral freedom is, wherever found, also supernatural, is the unproved and disputable position. If man be essentially supernatural, how shall we distinguish between God and man radically? The barrier is broken down, if every act of man's moral freedom be a supernatural act.

3. The position does not reach to the matter in dispute: for the opponents of the supernatural say they refer to something super-human and super-mundane. Is there such a mode of being? It is replied: Yes, because man is above nature. But, is there not something above man too—essentially so? If not, then no argument is advanced by this position; if there is, then the position contains no reply.

4. So that, besides saying that man can control nature, we must also say that there is a supernatural above man, in order to make any headway. It is not enough to say: Man can comprehend and control nature, and hence God may. All that is thus proved is an analogy, that man is like God; the true and real supernatural is not obtained.\*

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\* The argument from man's will to the supernatural has another relation, viz.: If man's will can use the sequences of nature for other ends

5. The law of cause and effect does *not* break down when applied to man's free will. If it did, then there would be pure contingency, and the element of no-law pervading the system. It is a universal law of finite being, that every beginning or change must have a cause. All that is finite is under this law. If this is not a universal law, no Natural Theology is possible; the basis of the whole argument is uprooted.

6. The real question is this: Is there a Supernatural which is absolute, and absolute Power and Will, at the basis and the source of all that is phenomenal?

To answer this we may be *helped* by the analogy, but it can only be subsidiary.

It is easier to prove that there is an absolute supernatural, than that the human will is absolutely supernatural. To attempt the latter would lead to a long discussion with naturalism on a side issue—whether the acts of man's will can be explained as non-supernatural. The opponent would say: If that is all the supernatural which you claim, my task is easy.

7. Perhaps we may even go farther, and say that the supernatural, in its manifestations, in its workings, is under the law of causation—not physical causation, but *real* causation. The manifested supernatural is orderly, is successive, makes a system, a historic system in fact, the whole of the Historic

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than the mechanical, etc., *a fortiori* God may, and equally without violating the uniformity of nature.



Revelation, which is a sublime manifestation of power and intelligence, of cause and effect on the widest scale.

8. Though the human will be not directly supernatural, yet the highest form of the Supernatural is doubtless in Will, viz., Absolute Personality, which implies will and moral perfection. (But this is only *stated* here, not proved: it is the result of the whole argument on the Being and Nature of God.)

It may be also said, that the Human Personality, the Human Will, is the highest manifestation of the Supernatural in the natural world (not including miracles, the incarnation, etc.). Here, chiefly, man is in the image of God.

9. But the true real Supernatural, in its essence, is the Absolute, the Divine.

### § 2. *The Reality of the Supernatural.*

(References for American theological students.

The Denial of the Supernatural. Tayler Lewis, in Vedder Lectures, 1875. Ref. (D.) Board.

The Sensible, the Extra-Sensible, the Super-Sensible. Lewes. Problems of Life and Mind, 229-253.

Van Oosterzee. Dogmatics, i. 160.

Dr. Dabney. The Sensualistic Philosophy, etc. Philosophy and the Supernatural. 1875.

McCosh. The Supernatural in Relation to the Natural. 1862.

Bushnell. Natural and Supernatural.

Hickok. Rational Psychology. Appendix.)

Having considered the Nature (True Idea) of the Supernatural, we come now to the Real Being of it, with which is involved its Necessary Being.

The Real and Necessary Being of the Supernatural may be evinced from various sources of evidence.

1. It is a necessity of Religion (and if man was made for religion, it follows that he was made to stand in relation to the Supernatural).

2. It is a necessity of Thought.

3. It is confirmed by a well-nigh universal testimony; there are exceptions, but these are about as numerous relatively as those of thinkers who deny an external world. Only those who deny reality to anything but immediate experience through sensation deny the Supernatural.

1. The evidence for the Necessity of the Supernatural is to be viewed in connection with the evidence for the Necessity of Religion: they cover the same ground.

There can be no religion without an underlying sense of the reality of the super-human and the super-sensible. From the highest religion to the lowest this is the one universal and common element.

Take this away, and all religion vanishes; accept it, and religion is possible, however vague the form of faith or feeling may be.

Take this away from the history of the race; just eliminate the sense of worship—the dependence on an Unseen yet Real Presence—and the history of the world becomes a vain show, without inward truth or rational basis or moral end; it is a chapter

in the laws of motion, an appendix to the physiology of the senses. It leaves man without a solid past or a valuable future—in a condition worse than that of the Stoics, of whom it is said their philosophy is above suicide-mark, and yet continually dropped below it.

Just as far, then, as there is evidence from history and consciousness that man is a religious being (even *animal*), that religion is a necessity of his spiritual nature as truly as air is vital to his physical growth and being—so far forth, conterminous with this at every point, is the evidence to man of the necessity of the supernatural.

To disprove this it is necessary to disprove and undermine the deepest faith of the race, its profoundest conviction.

Even where there is nothing left of religion but a vague sentiment, an undefined aspiration, an unintelligent impulse; still, so far forth as this goes, so far is the need of a belief in the supernatural recognized, dimly, it may be, but really.

Even those thinkers who have yielded themselves to an intense and all-absorbing intellectual scepticism, confess the moral and spiritual necessity of religion, and their scepticism makes the reluctant confession all the more impressive. Denying all present religions, they look for another, higher, because they feel the native majesty and authority of the Supernatural.\*

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\* *E. g.*, Comte, Tyndall, Huxley, and, in an eminent degree, Mill. The whole spirit of Mill's Inductive Philosophy was, to say the least,

## 2. The Supernatural viewed as a Necessity of Thought.

In relation to thought, the only alternative here is a denial of the possibility of any ultimate Truth—or rather any basis of Being—of any inherent reality in the universe. This alternative is Nihilism in respect to being, Nescience in respect to knowledge, Pessimism in respect to the end of being. It is saying, change is all; the flow of time and events is all; the stream of events in time has no beginning; casualty, not causality, rules; there is no order, no law, physical or moral; for as soon as you say, *law, uniformity*, you have something above the flow directing it. As between Fate and Chance, it says, Chance; for Fate has in it a principle and a method. To deny real and absolute Being is to deny the very essential ideas of reason itself. We take this ground—in respect to which we do not now argue, but claim—that all minds believe and must believe in the Supernatural, unless they proclaim all Truth and all Being to be a mockery and a delusion.

Discernment upon this fundamental point depends upon the invaluable mental habit of seeing *things* as they are—not seeing words instead of things—not

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non-religious (Sir James Stephens says that Mill's Logic has done more for atheism than any other book of the century). But in his last essay on Theism he confesses that "in the present state of our knowledge the adaptations in nature afford a large balance of probability in favor of *causation by intelligence*." *Three Essays*, pp. 168-70. (Even in his "Logic" he allows the possibility of miracles.) In Christianity he finds the high service of "inculcating the belief that our highest conceptions of combined wisdom and goodness exist in the concrete, in a living being, who has his eyes on us and cares for our good."

the vestigia nor the simulacra nor the larvæ of things, but the actual realities. All the "idola" of Bacon stand in the way of this immediate vision of the reality; yet it is the first condition of all true knowledge.

We speak of Thought and of what is involved in the Necessity of Thought. All thought, every proposition, affirms or denies; it affirms Being or something about it. Fundamental, metaphysical, necessary thought is affirmation of being. I am. Space is. Time is. The world is. Phenomena are. Substance is. The testimony of consciousness is absolute and final. Sensations, imaginations, conceptions, ideas, feelings—all states and modes of the mind *are*. The ego, self, also *is*. Here is absolute certainty. "Only subjective certainty," it may be said. That may be, but the suggestion is an afterthought—a reflected thought. The contents of consciousness, to us, simply *are*. In its primary affirmations there are no distinctions.

The essence of knowledge consists:

- (1) In the affirmation of Being.
- (2) The analysis into subject and object, thought and being. How far we have certainty of the latter.
- (3) The union of the two.

Further: (*a*) There is Thought; (*b*) there is the Necessity of Thought (our minds *must* view things under certain rational principles; mental action must proceed in accordance with these principles, or it must be suppressed altogether); (*c*) these rational principles enforce that our thinking and discernment of Being shall be thus and not otherwise, and thus

we have also enforced the Necessity to Thought of the Supernatural.

The principles referred to are such as these:

(a) The radical belief in a universal being—being unlimited and unconditioned.

(b) The universality of the law of cause and effect (*viz.*, a sufficient cause for all the changes, every change implying a previous and adequate cause).\*

(c) The category of the substantial and phenomenal.

(d) The practical (rational) necessity of choosing between order and chance; and the fact that reason is “informed” and “ensouled” only by order, law.†

(e) Even on the development theory, a sufficient ground or source for the development must be assumed—the law of Ground and Consequence.

(f) The undeniable idea and law of motion, change, and a *Primum Mobile*, as in Aristotle.

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\* Under this, too, the argument from design. See Mill's Concessions, and even Comte's.

† The *knowledge of Reason* consists of the vision (intuition) of the absolute Idea in the beginning—of the absolute Ideal at the end. Herein, if anywhere, lies man's intellectual likeness to God and the prepledge of his immortality. Gazing with open eye upon the Infinite and Eternal, full of awe but full of knowledge (and of love), constitutes the fullness of our being. The idea of Pure Being, of an Infinite Kosmos, is the object of profound wonder to every great thinker or sage. This is evident in all the schools from East to West, and the sentiment underlies all our scientific researches to day. It is also the elemental idea of the Christian “new-birth”—the “new simple idea” of Edwards—yet here more *concrete*, *viz.*, the knowledge of God face to face—the sense of the *Supreme Reality*. It is a perpetual possession of the religious mind, avouched by all experience, and of it no scepticism can rob the believer. And more than this: the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord—the knowledge of God Incarnate is real knowledge.

As man must think under these conditions, and as the conditions presuppose a Supernatural Power—so it follows that the Supernatural is a Necessity of Thought.

It may be added that as all truth is the conformity between thought and being (which conformity is ascertained by a variety of inter-measurements), so what is necessary to our thought in the supernatural is attested, and becomes the object of new conviction, by our examination of it under different points of view and different relations.

What is truth? How do we reach certainty?

There is—being.

There is—thought.

As is thought so is being—as is being so is thought; the equation of the two, duly ascertained, gives certainty, constitutes truth.

We find that whatever is necessary to thought in the sphere of the natural has its correspondent reality in being; whatever is necessary to thought in the supernatural has a similar reality, as we should justly infer; and testing the supernatural as we do the natural (not by the same tests but by real tests), we find all the signs of the equation between being and thought, and arrive at truth, at certainty.

3. The reality of the supernatural element is confirmed by the history of thought in all the schools of philosophical speculation.

This statement applies not only to all the ancient and accredited systems and schools, but also—and in a marked way—to the most modern schools of anti-theistic and even materialistic speculation.

The Supernatural is in them all more or less—expelled with a fork, it ever forces itself back.

The law of gravitation might seem to be defied when a column of water is thrown up into the air—until it all flows back again to its source, and it is evident that the same law governed the discharge and the return, that the law was served by the seeming violation. And so the very necessities of thought which seemed to lead to a denial of the Supernatural and the Eternal bring it back again in some other form, as resistlessly as the air rushes in to fill a vacuum.

Mr. J. S. Mill, in a remarkable passage in his *Three Essays*,\* says: “Science contains nothing repugnant to the position that every event which takes place results from a *specific volition* of the presiding power, provided that power adheres in its particular volition to general laws laid down by itself.”

Elsewhere † he says: “One only form of belief in the supernatural, one only theory respecting the origin and government of the universe, starts wholly clear, both of intellectual contradiction and of moral obliquity. It is that which, resigning irrevocably the idea of an omnipotent Creator, regards nature and life, not as the expression throughout of the moral character and purpose of the Deity, but as the product of a struggle between continuing goodness and an intractable material, as was believed by Plato, or a principle of evil, as was the doctrine of the Manichæans.”

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\* Posthumous Papers, 136.

† Essays on Religion, pp. 116, 117.



Herbert Spencer says: "That which persists unchanging in quantity, but ever changing in form under these sensible appearances which the universe presents to us, transcends human knowledge and conception; is an unknown and unknowable power which we are *obliged* to recognize as without limit in space, and without beginning or end in time.

"The sincere philosopher alone can know how high—we say not above human knowledge, but above human conception—is the universal power, whereof nature, life, thought, are manifestations.\*

"Our knowledge of noumenal existence has a certainty which our knowledge of phenomenal existence cannot approach; in other words, in the view of logic as well as of common sense, realism is the only rational thesis; all the others are doomed to fall." †

Of Matter and Spirit, Spencer says: ‡ "The one no less than the other is to be regarded as but a sign of the Unknown Reality which underlies both."

G. H. Lewes distinguishes; § "the sensible, the extra-sensible, and the super-sensible." (The extra-sensible is real and may be known, *e. g.*, ether). The super-sensible is the domain of theology and "Metem-pirics," which is "closed against the method of science, but is *open to faith and intellectual intuition.*" ¶

With Lewes the cardinal point of the Positive Philosophy is its ignoring of what is beyond the method

\* Spencer on Education, p. 109 (new edition).

† Spencer on Principles of Psychology (new edition), 32.

‡ Spencer on First Principles, p. 503.

§ Lewes' Problems of Life and Mind, i. 229.

¶ Lewes' Problems of Life and Mind, i. 243.

of science. He designates all this as "The Metempirical." Yet "admits much that is called Metaphysics," viz.: the highest generalizations of the several sciences; though "it excludes the problems of Matter, Force, Cause, Life, Mind, Object and Subject," as "insoluble, metempirical." \*

He allows "efficient causes," and says we "know essences," etc., properly understood, *i. e.*, as far as they come into manifestation or experience. So, too, in ontology we may know much.† A metaphysician may have a knowledge of being as certain as the mathematician's knowledge of magnitude, or the chemist's knowledge of affinity, the biologist's of life, the sociologist's of society—and this knowledge may be gained in the same way.‡

The position taken by Positivism, as to a First Cause, is thus stated by Littré, in a *discours* at his reception in the Masonic Lodge, Paris: § "Que faut il penser de la notion de cause première, de causalité suprême? Aucune science ne nie une cause première, n'ayant jamais rien rencontré qui la démentit; mais aucune ne l'affirme, n'ayant jamais rien rencontré qui la lui montrât. Toute science est enfermée dans le relatif; partout on arrive à des existences et à des lois irréductibles, dont on ne connaît pas l'essence."

With these impoverished abstractions of matter

\* Problems, etc., p. 57.

† Problems, etc., p. 60.

‡ This is emphatically true. In both cases the knowledge is ultimate. Magnitude is—magnitude. Being is—being.

§ Quoted in Rev. Chrét., by de Pressensé, 1875, Sept., p. 259.

(and physics in general), compare the lofty ideal, *e. g.*, of Plato—which is profounder, which is truer?

He asserts the reality of the *eternal ideas*. He speaks of rising out of “the sea of change” to the sea of beauty; \* of “participating in ideas;” of rising to the highest by abstracting, stripping off the finite till the real is left.† *The idea of the good* is the highest and last. “The idea of the good, last of all, is seen, and, when discerned, it is as the universal author of all things beautiful and right—parent of light and law of light in this world, and the source of truth and reason in the other.‡ This is the First Great Cause,§ which he must behold who would act reasonably, either in public or private life.” || It “gives truth to the object and knowledge to the subject.”

With Plato *the ethical*, the good, is the source of all—no abstract substance, no undefined force. “Can we ever believe that motion, and life, and mind, are not present with absolute being?” ¶ Protagoras said: “Man is the measure of all;” Plato, “God is the measure of all.” \*\*

With Plato, the Perfect One is the only intelligible reality (that can be truly known), and matter—the phenomenal—is unintelligible. With modern science

\* Banquet, 210.

† Republic, x. 597.

‡ In Rep., Bks. vi. vii.

§ “Not personal in Plato’s view,” it is said. But the question is not up.

|| Rep., vii. 517.

¶ Sophist, 249.

\*\* Laws, ii. 715.

matter and its changes comprise all that we can know or understand. Pure Being is "inscrutable," negative.

Aristotle affirms that nothing is moved by chance: movement must always have a principle. In order that it may energize (produce) it must have another principle eternally acting. There must then be that (something) which moves without being moved—eternal being, pure essence, pure actuality. The unmovable mover is necessary being, and because necessary, it is the good, and hence a principle.\*

Aristotle's principle is,† that all transition, *Κίνησις*, from the potential to the actual depends on an *actual* cause (not merely *potential*). As every particular object demands an actual moving (efficient) cause, so the world as a whole demands an absolutely first mover to shape (give form to) the passive matter.‡ This first mover is pure energy—eternal, pure, immaterial form—without parts—absolute spirit, mind (*νοῦς*), which thinks itself, and when thought, therefore, is the thought of thought. It is the cause of motion—the *good per se*—the end to which all tends—it acts by virtue of the attraction which the loved exerts upon the loving—it is the eternal *prius* of all development. Thought, which is the mode of its activity, constitutes the highest, best, and most blessed life.§

"The world has its principle in God, and this principle exists not merely as a form immanent in the

\* Others assume two principles—(1) inertia, matter, (2) sufficient reason of movement (not matter)—God.

† Met., ix. 8.

‡ Met., xii. 6.

§ Met., xii. 7.

world, like the *order of an army*, but also as an absolute self-existent substance, like *the general of an army.*" \*

There is no need to multiply instances. The reality of the ultimate, absolute Being is affirmed in all the schools, ancient and modern, excepting the purely materialistic and casual, and, as we have seen, with many partial recognitions and concessions of it here.

Even if it is declared to be unknowable, still it is recognized.

Bacon, Des Cartes, Leibnitz lay it at the basis. Kant builds upon the Ding-an-sich—as existing—necessary to thought, even though not demonstrated as being.

We find it in all the Pantheists—in Spinoza's Substance, Fichte's absolute Ego, Schelling's Idealism, Hegel's Idea and Being.

### § 3. *On the Manifestation of the Supernatural.*

There is hardly need of arguing this point, after what has been already said about the nature of the supernatural. If the supernatural be, and be what we have indicated, there can be no doubt, not only that it may, but that it *must* be manifested.

The supernatural is the ground and source of the natural: so that in one sense *all* the natural is but its manifestation.

The position that it *cannot* be manifested (even if it exist) is irrational and illogical. It may be the unknowable, but it still must issue forth in know-

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\* Ueberweg on Aristotle. History of Phil., i. 162-3.

able forms and relations. The *a priori* impossibility of its manifestation, which some assert, is wholly groundless.

The supernatural, in general, is what is before, above, in its being and nature independent of nature—what produces the natural and sustains its being and going. It may, however, be manifested *in and through* nature (such manifestation originating not in nature—found in it, but not of it).

The supernatural, it is claimed by supernaturalists, can manifest itself in and through the finite, but it is the influx of a new power into the flow of time—it is the incoming of a new force, to modify, elevate, transform the finite for some higher end or purpose.

The distinguishable cases of manifestation are three.

(a) Cases where the supernatural comes and *stays as the natural*.

What thus comes in may afterward become permanent in the finite—as, *e. g.*, life among the lifeless. What is here claimed is that this life cannot be explained or deduced from any finite forces or forms that went before, but requires (to explain its origin) the incurrance or inflow of a higher power than has as yet been seen or known. For instance, man with his endowments above the animals; the materials may be found in nature, and may be used, but they are transformed by a higher power and for a higher use.

(b) Cases where the supernatural comes *and goes*.

For example, when a prophecy is uttered, the means and instrumentalities are found in nature—a

man, a speech, a people—but the words show an omniscience which was not before there, and require a supernatural source or origin. Here the prophecy abides, but the power in which it was uttered is not inherited. While (above, in the case of life) the life *once* imparted goes on and becomes *natural*, yet its source is supernatural (*i. e.*, above all the nature there was there).

So with miracles : they come and are not perpetuated.

(c) Cases where the Supernatural is both *staying and going*.\* (Operating upon a *system*.)

For example, revelation, the inspiration of Scripture. Here truths are revealed, not known before. They are not to be explained by, or as growing out of, what is before known. They have a *supernatural* source.

The Bible remains. The supernatural in it stays—as natural, it may be said. But its truths are ever upheld and applied by the same omniscient power that first announced them—to illumine and to sanctify mankind. Christ is in the incarnation and in the church. God acts in regeneration and in sanctification. There are revivals in the religious sphere. And thus there is a system of supernatural operations where what has once been revealed is revealed anew, and is carried out by supernatural agency to its practical design.†

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\* *I. e.*, returning.

† See McCosh, *Nature and the Supernatural*, Chapter II. "The System of the Supernatural." Also Bushnell. *Nature and the Supernatural*, Chapter IX. "The Supernatural Compatible with Nature and subject to Fixed Laws."

*Note.*—How do we know anything about this supernatural Being? Is it not all unknowable and incognizable? This is thought to be the question of questions, and enough to silence anybody. But it just begins the debate. How does any one know aught about anything? In two points or stages. (a) He knows, somehow, that it is. (b) He knows, further, *what* it is, by its manifestations, its phenomena, and does not and cannot know in any other way.

#### § 4. *The Course and Conclusion of the Argument.*

1. The heart of the question, the first point to be established is, the Valid Being (Reality) of the Supernatural, *i. e.*, some mode of being (call it force, substance, the absolute, or what one will), above and controlling all events, *phenomena*, in time and space.

All religions agree in this, and all philosophies, excepting only that form of philosophy which is essentially materialistic, knowing only phenomena, sensations, their possibilities and their inductions, a mere mathematically infinite (indefinite) flow of events as successive; or, which denies the existence of anything infinite, eternal, absolute.

Even those who deny that we know of such being, but grant that there is something incognizable (still saying that it IS), are not excluded; for they concede an element of the supernatural in conceding the existence of what is incognizable.

All others \* recognize more or less clearly the real

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\* The class of absolute sceptics, Nescients and Nihilists, are to be



Being of what is above and beyond mere nature—mere succession of phenomena in time. This being conceded and established—

2. The next point is, that in this supernatural mode of being, whatever it may be, and however we may define it, we have and must have, by an irresistible logic (the law of cause and effect is conceded by all in some form), the ground, the cause, the original of all phenomenal and temporal being. We ask not yet how, but affirm *that*, be it by emanation, logic, or fiat.

That is, the Supernatural does and must *manifest*, unfold itself in the phenomena and processes of the finite universe, under the law of cause and effect. Even if it be only a universal Force, or an aboriginal Substance, it does this, whenever and however a *transition* is made into the realm of time and history. So that we have not only the Supernatural, but the *manifestation* of it—as necessary fact and truth—which must be conceded as real.

Not only the real being of the Supernatural, but the real manifestation of it, in the initial act of procession—call it creation or emanation—is necessary. Get rid of all miracles, and the one great miracle of creation or self-manifestation of the Absolute remains necessary on any rational theory of the universe. The possibility of such a manifestation must be conceded by all who hold to *Evolution, Development, Progress*, in any form, or else these words have no

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met in the proper place on their special grounds. But they are exceedingly sparse, and of no real weight.

meaning : Evolution—of what? Development—of what? Mere evolution and development in the abstract is nothing but a name for a possibility. A law of cause and effect, when there are no substances, real existences, to which it is applied, is sterile—an abstract method.

So we have not merely the *possibility* of a manifestation (self-revelation) of the Supernatural, but also its reality, as an underlying *fact*—for all the theories of the universe—of evolution, of development, or however they may be named. They all take this for granted. This must hold good for philosophers as well as for theologians, for science as well as religion.\*

This cuts the roots of the theory that the Supernatural is simply something in itself inscrutable, remote, isolated—an unintelligible abstraction—for we have obtained not only *the Supernatural itself*, as a datum of reason and philosophy, but also the *Supernatural manifested*, as necessary to any evolution, development, progress, or construction of a universal system.

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\* As to the manifested Supernatural, three points may be stated. (a) The Supernatural produces the natural. *Gioberti* : “*Ens creat existentias—the formula of creation.*” This production—if not creation—is recognized in all systems which allow anything but the finite. This is the first miracle. (b) The Supernatural abides in the natural; the First Cause in second causes—the primal force in all secondary forces. (c) All that revelation adds is, the Supernatural may, and does at times, enter by a new illapse or influx into the natural, producing forms, forces, modes of manifestation before unknown. *E. g.* Man—in nature ; Moses, a prophet—among men ; Christ, the Son of God—among all things.

3. Thus, and only thus, is the ground cleared, and *common ground* found for both religion and philosophy, in respect to the question about the Supernatural in manifestation, or Miracle in history.\*

All historic time, whether of the visible heavens or of the earth, of the earth or of man, must begin with a manifestation or act which is essentially supernatural—in short, a *miracle*—an act the most stupendous and wonderful we can conceive; or, if not conceive, which we can know and see to be necessary, logically, or in the logic of fact.

And, if it may and must be so, what sufficient reason can be assigned for denying that it may so go on, that the Supernatural may still continue its manifestations, at other points and junctures, according to the exigencies of the vast unfolding plan of Creation and Providence? Why may there not be a progressive unfolding and revelation, in which the same Supernatural shall manifest itself afterward as at the beginning? For the Supernatural still remains what and as it is: it is its nature to go forth, proceed, reveal (whether as force or as love); and who can set to it limits, or say that it must proceed according to a uniform succession of blind natural causes called matter, energy, and motion? †

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\* The distinction between the Supernatural in itself and its manifestation is to be emphasized. Usually only the last, the Supernatural in history, is discussed. But we have aimed to go to its roots, and to find the fulcrum for the lever—the *pou sto*—in the nature and necessity of the case.

† We have the first great manifestation of the Supernatural in the

4. The only doctrine or theory that stands in the way of accepting the supernatural in history (on the ground of adequate testimony) is this: viz., that all things continue as from the beginning; or the uniformity of nature, expressed by the further theory, the conservation of forces, the law of evolution, and the principle of natural selection.\*

This theory will come up for consideration at various points hereafter. Here it is necessary only to indicate the way to clear the *a priori* ground, and make fair place and verge for the *testimony* to the miraculous. All we now want to claim or argue is that there is no *a priori* impossibility of the manifestation of the Supernatural in history. Three points may be noted:

(a) The uniformity of nature is no ultimate law. All it means is, that the same causes, acting under the same conditions, produce the same results. If a new cause comes in, there is nothing in the uniformity of nature to prevent its producing its proper effects, as even Mill grants.

(b) The laws of nature give no real principle, they are only names for modes of action. These laws are

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very being, production, of nature itself, in creation (*sit venia verbo*); for if any act be essentially supernatural, it is the creation. Hence the miracle of the incarnation does not stand alone: it is the sequence of creation, and the one is as supernatural as the other. It is significant that in the theology of Christianity the Logos is both in creation and in the incarnation (Proem of John's Gospel). The miracles in the system of redemption are easier to grasp and believe if we accept the primal miracle of creation. Deny the one—and either one—and the other logically goes.

\* This last is simply a regulative principle.

flexible ; the higher control the lower ; man subdues the earth.

(c) In the theory of the conservation (and correlation) of force, there is a fallacy. If force be all there is in the *universe*, the theory is true : but that includes the supernatural fountain ; if the term is used of any finite forces, the theory is not proved : these may be changed and dispersed, and they do pass away (as Herschel said of *vis viva*). This theory only holds good as there is supposed to be Infinite and Absolute Force, ever *reënforcing* finite waste, change, and decay.

Hence, if the theory includes under force the supernatural fountain, it proves nothing to the purpose ; if it is restricted to finite forces, it stands unproved and disproved.

5. All the theories about the universe, except that of the Nihilists and Nescients, turn upon the question of the transition from the primal essence to the forms of space and time, from the supernatural to the natural, the infinite to the finite. With the exception of Nescience, which denies all possible thought in respect to the matter, all theories may be brought into the following scheme :

(1) Rude Materialism. Lucretius, in "De Natura Rerum," is the best exponent of this. Atoms and motion given, all things may be engendered, in time enough and with chances enough. An atom is an impenetrable point in space, and with motion to set it going, it will in time produce the universe.

But what is an atom ? No scientist can tell us.

And how does motion come to be mated with atoms? Neither can be gotten out of the other.

(2) More refined Materialism. Here physical force is taken as primary. From this force matter is in some way developed. Pile up forces enough, and in some way atoms are produced. Perhaps a diffused ether in oscillation is the nearest to the conception.

(3) The theory of some mode of being, inscrutable, but which can be stated, which is neither matter nor force, but from which matter and force come, or in which they are, or forms of which they are—as the inside and outside of a bowl. This is what Tyndall and Huxley have been seeking. Just as we are beings partly spiritual and partly material, produced from that which can produce both. Mill's theory, in general, comes here. He was too wise a man to construct the universe, but he says that as far as we can go in our thoughts we come to this. We have sensations, and refer them to an outer world. Before we had sensation there was a possibility of sensation, and in the world there was a possibility of producing sensation. So he says, Spirit is that in me which gives the possibility of sensation, and the world is that outside of me which has the power to produce sensation in me. This is his ultimate theory.

(4) The theory that spirit, as abstract and undefined, is primary, and from this the universe is derived by emanation, in successive grades. The East Indian Pantheism.

(5) Spirit is primary, not as abstract and undefined, but as thought, with logical law, law of logos or general reason. The development of this spirit by logi-

cal laws gives the universe. This is the Pantheism of Hegel.

(6) Spirit as will is the basis, but as unconscious will, producing the universe. This is the latest German philosophy.

(7) Spirit as personal will and intelligence, producing the finite universe by an act. Schelling's philosophy in its latest form. This contains the essential points of the Theistic theory of the universe.

All have the same problem. All grant, in some sense, a supernatural, a *prius* to creation—some mode of primal being, even if unknown. All philosophy raises an altar to the unknown God. Whom ye ignorantly worship Him declares Christianity to you.

“ He hides himself behind eternal laws,  
Which and not Him, the sceptic, seeing, exclaims  
There is no God :  
And never did a Christian's adoration  
So praise Him as this sceptic's blasphemy.”\*

#### SUMMARY :

By this line of argument the following points are made :

- (1) An irresistible (necessary) belief in the reality of the supernatural—the absolute.†
- (2) As a necessary consequence, a belief in the possibility of its being *manifested*. The alleged *a priori* impossibility of its being manifested is baseless.
- (3) A belief, equally irresistible and equally univer-

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\* Schiller. Don Carlos, Act iii. Sc. x.

† In all recent physics there is a metaphysical background. This is seen in Huxley, Spencer, Tyndall.

sal, that the supernatural, *so far as it is manifested*, is known, and cannot but be known : *so far forth*, and that is enough.

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## CHAPTER II.

CAN THE SUPERNATURAL BE KNOWN? OR (EXPRESSED MORE CONCRETELY—NOT AS EXACTLY EQUIVALENT, BUT NEARLY ENOUGH SO), CAN GOD BE KNOWN?

THIS is the second chief introductory topic, before considering the proof of the Being of God.

References :

(These include what belongs to the involved questions: Is all knowledge relative? Is all our knowledge only from and by Induction? Can faith and knowledge be sundered in this matter? The difference between absolute knowledge and knowledge of the absolute.)

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### § I. *What is it "To Know?"*

It is the affirmation of being in some form which is in relation to our knowing capacities. These capacities are various, and so the different kinds of knowledge are thus determined; as,

(a) What is in immediate consciousness.

(b) What is perceived by and through the senses; and

(c) What is derived by induction or by inference.

(d) What comes under the categories of cause and effect, of substance and phenomena, etc. We know

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\* He argues against Spencer, on the ground of Spencer, viz., the Absolute or Unknowable is beyond classification (*i. e.*, by parts and whole, genera and species). Better ground is: There is a *knowledge* of being, of truth (objective), which is *above* and beyond this, viz., what is universal and necessary, *per se—Causa sui*; and that Spencer himself is a witness to this in his Doctrine of Force and its Persistency.

there *must be* causes and substances, even if we cannot grasp them.

(e) What stands as universal and necessary; what is known in and of itself, and not merely as conjoined, or as deduced by any process. Under this: (1) Axiomatic certainties—as those of mathematics: (2) Intuitions, which are irresolvable. Space and time. Being as infinite and absolute. The affirmation of ultimate fact, ultimate truth, ultimate being.

Or, knowledge may be viewed in its elements and forms.

THE ELEMENTS.—1. What is in distinct consciousness.

2. Sensible perception. Anschauungen.

This is knowledge elementary.

THE FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE as completed.

A. Knowledge by processes. The cognitive understanding.

1. Knowledge by induction and deduction from the facts or data of consciousness and sensations.

2. — by Categories: cause and effect, substances and phenomena. Abstraction, generalization, etc.

B. Knowledge in its wholeness and unity. All phenomena (a) from one source, (b) one in many (substance, force), or (c) under *one law*—of evolution, development.

This knowledge is only of the reason: reaching to Unity of Being; Unity of Law; Unity of Thought—and Being.

Or, in still another light, The Constituents of all Knowledge are:

1. The affirmation of fact, or being, or thought (positive or negative).

2. The joining of subject and predicate in either (a) an analytic or (b) a synthetic judgment.

§ 2. *The various Theories as to the Knowledge which Man can have of God.*

1. Absolute knowledge is claimed, as in the Pantheistic schools. We know God because we are a part of God. This, however, is simply a knowledge of abstract being.

2. Absolute knowledge is claimed at the other extreme. We have no knowledge of God because we have no faculties by which we may know Him. All we can know is that which comes through sense, and the inferences from it. The whole process of knowledge is induction. This is the ground of Positivism.

3. We know God as an innate idea; by immediate intuition of his being—of his personal being—as we know nature by the senses, and space by reason. A sub-mystic view.

4. The mystic view: God is supersubstantial, ὑπερ-ούσιος.\*

5. In no way can we attain to a knowledge of God, by the intellect, by the reason or by reasoning. Logic and metaphysics lead only to contradictions—to (a) Negative knowledge; (b) Relative knowledge. But we may and must lay hold of Him by faith—may and must believe in Him and obey Him.

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\* See Anselm in Monologue, 26.

We can never *know* the Absolute and Infinite One ; we fall into antinomies ; we are baffled by lack of capacity ; reason lands us in contradictions.

6. To know is not equivalent to, or limited to,

- (a) Absolute knowledge,
- (b) Immediate intuition, or,
- (c) Definite conception.\*

In order to know God truly we do not need to claim a knowledge of the essence of being ; nor an innate idea—as complete and finished ; nor to define him so as to limit him.

There is a knowledge of reason as well as of sense and the understanding. We may know *that*, without knowing what ; may know quality without knowing quantity ; may have a true knowledge, as far as it goes, though it is inadequate as to the full measure of being ; we may have *γνώσις*, though not *κατάληψις* ; † we may know by revelation (natural in us), when we do not grasp the unrevealed essence ; and also by a special revelation (God in his word, God in Christ), while the essence lies beyond us. ‡

Also, we may attain full knowledge and conviction

\* Des Cartes. “ *Comprehendere enim est cogitatione complecti ; ad hoc autem, ut sciamus aliquid, sufficit, ut illud cogitatione attingamus.*” We know God “ *eodem modo quo montem manibus tangere possumus, sed non ut arborem, aut aliam quampiam rem brachiis nostris non majorem amplecti.*”

† So John of Damascus. “ *Neither are all things unsaid, nor is all said ; neither are all unknown, nor are all known.*”

‡ Aquinas. “ *Comprehendere Deum impossibile est cuique intellectui creato ; attingere vero mente Deum qualitercumque magna est beatitudo.*”

Leibnitz (Theod. Pref.). “ *Les perfections de Dieu sont celles de*

by the combination of the different modes of knowledge in one result. *E. g.* Intuitions and universal truths combine and harmonize with the results of experience.

Induction and deduction coincide—

—where ontological and *a posteriori* proofs combine;

—where proofs from all the sources converge to one result;

—where the subjective idea and the objective law correspond—

As when—Newton deduced gravitation and applied it;

As when—Leverrier deduced Neptune and found it;

As when—by ontology we are led to the idea of pure being, and find it verified in the order and harmony of the universe—thought standing over against being—binding all in one—so that the infinite and finite make up one system.

In one respect Aristotle has greatly troubled speculation—in his doctrine that the *ἔλγ* is the ground of all potentiality and finiteness, while the *εἶδος*, the principle of form, is divine and eternal; the two together making up the individual (*σύνολον*). (The assertion respecting the *εἶδος* places Aristotle—with Socrates and Plato—among the idealists, as distinguished from the old Greek materialists.)\* The

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nos âmes, mais il les possède sans bornes ; il est un océan, dont nous n'avons reçu que les gouttes ; il y a en nous quelque puissance, quelque connaissance, quelque bonté ; mais elles sont entières en Dieu."

\* All philosophy lies between the flux and chaos of Heraclitus (Ionic) and the Absolute One of Parmenides (Eleatic). Plato's "ideas" came between.

philosophy which is evolved by the Christian view, viz., all that is not God has its substance (*ὕλη* as well as *εἶδος*) from God ;\* all creatures *must* come from *potence* to *act* † (or be brought). God alone is under no category—being *actus purus* ; he categorizes all that is finite. All that is finite must be under categories, and so can be known. Of God, only an *analogous* knowledge can be obtained ; because the universe is not of his nature, but is only an analogy of the divine being.

(Cf. Prof. Katzenberger of Bamberg, in *Theol. Quartalschrift*, 1864, pp. 168-174.)

Can we think that which is not in its essence a thought? This is the question in Pantheism of the logical, Hegelian kind, the assertion underlying, that the essence of thought (*idea*) and being are one—and that *idea* precedes.

But: Is not being before thought—logically and in fact? Does not a thinking—an activity—presuppose a being? If so, then the laws of being may be more and other than the laws of thought.

(Laws of thought :

1. Judgment, subj. pred. copula.
2. Contradiction, negativity.
3. Inference.

Laws of being :

1. Being *is*—existence affirmed ; and has movement—activity—development—a process.

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\* Augustine : " *Omnis substantia, quæ Deus non est, creatura est.*"

† This statement involves a reference to the Aristotelian distinctions as to being. See F. Brentano (a pupil of Trendelenberg), *Die mannigfache Bedeutung des Seienden nach Arist.*, 1862.

2. Law of process—development by antagonisms.

3. Issue—end—ad quem.

How far agree—and disagree?)

### § 3. *Discussion of the Theories.*

(In this discussion the theory that God is known as an Innate Idea will not be considered. It cannot be reasoned about. It states no process which can be apprehended. If a man says he has it, and can give no account of it, there is no more to be said.)

#### I. *Positivism and the Inductive Philosophy.*

The inductive theory says that all knowledge comes by observation of phenomena (sensations) and by generalizing those phenomena; in other words, putting into a general statement what is true of a particular case, and affirming that this is true of all similar cases.

This is the root of Nescience in respect to God. If we can only know sensations and generalize them, of course we cannot come to the cause of those sensations. All beyond must be pure zero.

Not to anticipate subsequent discussions, some general objections to the above view are here stated.

(1) In sensation itself there is given more than mere sensation. There is a material impact, *and also* a feeling of resistance, not material, but conscious—a resisting self, a person, an Ego—involved (whether or not this is given in the sensation itself is not material, it is certainly implied). And this *conscious knowledge* cannot be derived from the external phenomena, but is a distinguishable state of the ego.

The ego cannot be derived from the non-ego. It is Mill's confession that "a series of sensations, conscious of itself, is the ineffable mystery." The inductive philosophy gives account of the successive sensations. But that something whereby we know them cannot come out of these sensations. Leibnitz says: "Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius in sensu, nisi intellectus ipse."

The fact is, that in our knowledge, after all, we know mind by the First Intention, and matter only derivatively.

(2) The process of Induction—from particulars to a whole or wholes—is not a sensation, but a purely mental process, not to be derived from any forces or forms of matter. There is nothing in nature corresponding to an induction from particulars to generals. The facts are in nature, but the process is in the mind; it is a procedure in thought-knowledge, which has its own laws.

(3) Still more emphatically must we make this statement when we apply mathematics (the principles involved in our necessary ideas of space and time—geometry and arithmetic) to the matters brought under induction. In doing this we bring all the shifting phenomena of sense under invariable laws (inviolable laws, some are fond of saying, whenever a question of the supernatural comes in). Astronomers, from observing certain phenomena, concluded that a disturbing cause must be found in a planet never yet seen, because they held the uniformity of nature. What observation of mere sense ever led to such a conclusion?



(4) If induction be all, we are involved at the end, by the process itself, in inconceivable ignorance even of what we do know. The theory is that we know only antecedents and consequents, and know the consequents only as modes of the antecedents. Scientific knowledge is the knowledge of these differing modes.

Suppose then that we trace back to the utmost point within our reach the last *inspected* consequences; these can be known "only as we know the antecedents," only as "modes of the antecedents." Then they cannot be known at all, for by the supposition we cannot reach *their* antecedents.

Hence, the whole process of knowing fails at the end. Not knowing the ultimate antecedent, all our seeming knowledge becomes a chain of total ignorance. It is a chain which is all hanging, and nowhere hangs. The invisible things being unknown, we cannot and do not know the visible. Without the noumena there are no intelligible phenomena.

(5) In all induction, too, theory *leads*. No great discovery takes place without anticipation—a mental process. A sense of unity, law, power, order, presides over all the special investigations.

(6) With induction alone no knowledge of ultimate law, truth, being, is possible. Induction cannot conclude beyond its sphere. If all facts are of sensible phenomena, no conclusion can be reached to anything beyond time and space. Universally applied, the "Inductive Method" must be atheistic.

II. *The position that all knowledge is of the Relative, and hence we cannot know the Absolute.*

The Absolute and Infinite, being out of all relations, cannot be an object of knowledge : \* Man is, on every side, in relations, and can know only what he is and what he is in. The relative contradicts the absolute ; God cannot be both relative and absolute.

Remarks—

(1) Upon the terms Unconditioned, Absolute, Infinite (especially in Hamilton's usage of them).

Hamilton uses "infinite" in the sense of that which never can be completed, "absolute" in the sense of that which is complete in and of itself, and is also unrelated. God then cannot be absolute and infinite at the same time.

This is peculiar to Hamilton's theory. It is not warranted by previous usage of terms.

A better definition of the Absolute is: that which is complete in and of itself, having no necessary dependence upon, or relation to, any other thing ; and of the Infinite—that which never can be completed by finite terms or increments (Hamilton's infinite is the mathematical infinite—the infinite series, infinite time and space). The proper positive sense of the

\* Sir Wm. Hamilton : "To think is to *condition*." "We can know only the limited," and "the conditionally limited." "We cannot know the unconditionally unlimited = the Infinite ; nor the unconditionally limited = the Absolute." In other words, "unconditional negation of limitation = the Infinite ; unconditional affirmation of limitation = the Absolute." "All that we can know is only known as 'won from the void and formless *infinite*.'" "

Hamilton's views are wonderfully well put ; his work is a triumph of citation and application. But it is, nevertheless, one of the most puzzling of questions what Hamilton and Mansel really mean by "Relative," "Knowledge of Relations," etc.

term is: There is something in the nature of the Infinite which prevents its being completed by any finite additions. The Infinite is not to be contrasted with the Absolute: it *is* the Absolute, brought into relation to (standing over against) the Finite.

It is to be noted also that these words, Infinite, Absolute, Unconditioned, are adjectives, not substantives. They have meaning only when some such proposition as the following is understood: All being, all substances may, must be analyzed into absolute and relative (being), infinite and finite (being), unconditioned and conditioned (being, etc.). It is a pantheistic conception which takes these terms by themselves and puts abstractions at the basis of the universe. In fact, it is the radical defect of Hamilton and Mansel that they have taken definitions from Pantheism and applied them to theistic views. Because we cannot grasp the Absolute by itself, therefore we cannot know the absolute God.

It should be observed also that while Hamilton asserts that the knowledge of the Absolute and Infinite is a blank, he nevertheless proceeds to distinguish them. Denying that there is anything positive in our knowledge of the Infinite, he yet makes definitions in that field.

(2) As to the sense of Relative and In Relation.

(Hamilton argues upon these at length, but the final sense which he would give to them cannot be extracted from his writings.)

(a) Of their possible meanings.

(a') They may mean that all things in the universe are in relation among themselves, so that if we are

to know them truly, we must know them as they exist in those relations.

This is indisputably true.

(*b'*) The meaning may be, that as we are related to other things (and all things), we cannot know them unless as and thus related to them.

This is also true. We cannot know anything unless we have such a relation to it that we can know it. Anything out of all relation to us we cannot possibly know.

(*c'*) It may be meant that the Absolute and Infinite are out of all relations to us and to anything else, and hence we cannot know them.

But such an Absolute does not exist. The term, as has been said, is an adjective. God is not, cannot be such a being. Whatever He may have been in the beginning, He certainly is not such a being now. Even the pantheist does not claim this.

(*d'*) Because we are relative and related beings, we cannot in any way know anything about the Absolute and Infinite Spirit.

This is the real point of debate, and on this we join issue.

(*b*) The force and propriety of the terms as defined.

(This will be considered in relation to Dr. Mansel's exposition, as that is the clearest and fairest.)

The fundamental and fallacious maxim involved in Mansel's position is: *Quantum sumus scimus; Simile simili cognoscitur.\**

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\* Less definitely, Boethius, who is approved by Hamilton: "Omne quod cognoscitur non secundum sui vim, sed secundum cognoscentium potius comprehenditur facultatem."

One of the Neo-Platonists (Plotinus?) said: "He that sees the sun

This is thought to lead to the conclusion that if we can know God, we are a part of Him, and if we are not a part of him, we cannot know Him. Pantheism *or* Nescience: it is on this alternative that Hamilton and Mansel have discussed the question, and capitulated to the pantheist.

This must be affirmed to be a radically vicious theory of knowledge, with just enough truth in it to make it seem plausible. Knowledge does not depend on identity of nature. If we can know only what we are, how can we know the external world? We can certainly know the non-ego. Further, we know that space is boundless; but does this show that *we* are boundless?

The true doctrine is the Christian doctrine—that because man is made in the image of God, he may therefore know something of Him. He is spiritual, like God; and may know and worship God as spirit—which is denied to brutes. But this does not make him to be one with God, “of the same substance, power, and glory.” \*

Knowledge requires a capacity—a kinship, not an identity. Man, as spirit, knows matter, not because he is material. The ego knows the non-ego. The holy knows the sinful. God, in knowing man, does not un-deify himself.

(c) The argument from “Consciousness.”

Mansel gives four conditions of all consciousness:

must be solar.” This answers to, “A triangle would conceive of God as triangular.”

\* This, in the Creed, marks off Christ from the creature.

(1) In all consciousness there is a distinction between one object and another, (2) there is a relation of subject and object, (3) there is succession and duration—time between different ideas, (4) personality. All these, he says, are to be denied of the Infinite and Absolute; and as they limit our consciousness, it follows that “the Infinite and Absolute cannot be known in our consciousness.”

But this again imposes the conditions of consciousness on the objects of consciousness. Those conditions are inconsistent with our *being* absolute and infinite, but not with our knowing the reality of the Absolute and Infinite.\*

(d) We must argue against this theory of the relativity of knowledge, on the ground that we cannot know relations, without some adequate knowledge of the things related.

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\* The theory applies, likewise, as we have seen, to the knowledge of space and time, as unending and illimitable. It applies also to the ideas of substance, first cause, and personality. Mansel gives up even the personality of God, on the ground that He cannot be both absolute and personal. (He accepts God's personality on grounds of “faith,” but his position on grounds of reason is perilous in the extreme.)

He applies the theory to morality also, saying that in God's mind moral ideas, laws, and truth may be utterly different from the things of the same name in us. “Morality,” he says, “consists essentially in our obligation to obey a superior being.” But, against this, (1) though morality is obligation, it is obligation to be *right* and do right. Unless the idea of right comes in, there is no *moral* obligation, only physical; (2) morality *is* “obligation to the will of a superior being,” but the superior being must have in himself (and there must be in our knowledge of him) a moral quality, appealing to the “categorical imperative” within us. “Be ye holy, for I am holy.”

Only as far as we know the things can we know the relations.

Relatives, relations—are copulas of discourse. We cannot understand the copula without knowing the subject and predicate (*e. g.*, the sun, earth, moon—if we did not know something about *them*, we should have a very vague knowledge of the solar system and astronomy—the tides, eclipses, etc.). God and man—what can we know of their relations, if we do not know *them*? The relations are made by the beings and things and facts related. A relation is an abstract phrase, without sense or contents, until we know the related objects.

(*e*) The most difficult and obscure part of our knowledge—*where we in fact know the least*—is in the relations of being, of the parts of the universe to each other. *E. g.* The relations of God to man; of the infinite to the finite; of eternity and time; of space and its parts; of soul to body; of matter to mind; of sensation to consciousness. The mystery of things is chiefly here.

(*f*) The advocates of this doctrine affirm, notwithstanding the position they take, the possibility of a rational “faith” in God; but in fact the doctrine annuls the possibility of faith in God as truly as of the knowledge of Him.

For (1) faith is limited by consciousness, equally with knowledge. All the reasons equally apply. Faith cannot transcend consciousness. (2) Faith must have an apprehended object—a discerned, known object. Else it is vain.

(*g*) The theory restricts knowledge unduly.

It says: Knowledge is (1) something of which we have a clear *finite* conception; or, (2) it is the product of the image-making power, and does not include all that we are convinced of; or, (3) it must be a grasping of all the causes and conditions of phenomena—which is absolute knowledge.

(*h*) The theory leaves for the sphere of Christianity (and all religion) mere feeling, sentiment, or a blind impulse. This would drive Christianity out of the field, with all cool heads and consecutive thinkers.

III. *Is our knowledge of the Infinite and Absolute merely negative?*

(1) The idea of “negative” is superficially favored by the form of the word Infinite = non-finite; but take the parallel case of the word *immortal*, where the meaning is certainly positive.

Kant (Logic, Introd., c. 8) says: “Negative notions guard us from error. They are not needed in cases where it is impossible to be deceived. But they are very important in relation to the conceptions we form of such a being as God.” They are of use to exclude from our thoughts of Him all that is *not* infinite; but not to exclude the Infinite itself!

(2) It should be remarked that no one means by the assertion, “our knowledge of God is negative,” to affirm a pure negation of being—to say that the Infinite = 0.

The German distinction between Nichtswissen (knowing that nothing is) and Nichtwissen (not knowing in certain relations what is or is not), is applicable here. To affirm the former of God is Nihil-



ism, is atheism. The philosophy of Nescience is not—Nihilism.

(3) The term “negative,” then, in the proposition, “our knowledge of God is negative,” must be taken in a relative sense, and must refer to our knowledge.

Granting that the Infinite and Absolute Being exists—our idea of it is, and must be, purely negative—the result of “impotence of the mind.”

The question eludes our grasp when it is said that the negativity of our knowledge of God means, that though we know that an Infinite and Absolute Being exists, yet we cannot do two things more in the process of knowledge; (1) exhaust the scope of the predicates Infinite and Absolute; or, (2) define the limits of the Being. We grant both positions, and say further, that if we should “define the limits” of the Infinite Being, we should un-define it—turn it into its contradictory. If we have a clear, definite conception of it, we have no idea of *it* at all. To define it thus, is to deny its being.

The question to be held fast is, whether our knowledge, our ideas, refer only to the Finite and Limited; whether they consist exclusively of clear logical conceptions, existences with determinate boundaries. To *say* that this exhausts all knowledge, is to beg the question: the affirmation must be proved.\*

(4) Our knowledge of the Infinite may properly be said to be negative in the sense that it involves negative definitions; *i. e.*, denying something of any-

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\* If it *could* be proved, we should come ultimately to Hegel's position, “*Sein u. Nichts,*” as identical.

thing. We affirm that it is non-finite, that no limits can be assigned to it. But such a definition gives us the idea in *relation to the Finite*, and not in itself.

(5) The Finite involves the real negation—negation of being—by limitation. Here the maxim fully applies: “*Omnis determinatio est negatio.*” There is a vast deal that the Finite is *not*. All besides its limited self is denied of it. Hence the positive is really upon the other side, viz.:

(6) The Infinite is the positive in thought, in the highest sense.

Trendelenberg (*Log.*, ii. 452) says: “The Absolute is not a negative notion. We reach it by a negative process. We remove everything which limits it, but the notion itself is positive, and if it be correctly thought is the most positive of all notions, because not limited.”

Herbert Spencer (in *First Principles*, ch. 2) says: “The Absolute is positive, for in the very denial of our power to know what it is lies the affirmation that it is. Our conception of the Relative disappears, if our idea of the Absolute is a pure negation.”

Hamilton himself has said: “That is a positive idea which affirms existence.”

#### CONCLUDING STATEMENTS:

I. We can give a positive as well as negative statement of the Infinite.

In the way of negation: The Infinite is that (*e. g.*, space and time) to which no limits *can be assigned*. Positively: The Infinite is that which is complete in itself, perfect, absolute, unconditioned.

2. We have an idea—though not a conception—  
notion—of the Infinite.

An idea is that which we know to be, as having a real and necessary being. It refers to pure being.

A conception is that which we know to be under the forms and limitations of time and sense.

If we had a conception of the Infinite we should make it finite.

IV. *The position that we can have an absolute knowledge of God.*

We have affirmed that, as far as such predicates as Infinite and Absolute are concerned, we can know, positively, that they belong to God, without being able to grasp or comprehend them.

But though we know the Infinite and Absolute in this sense, it does not at all follow that from it we are able to deduce the Finite and Relative—as Pantheism asserts.

A knowledge of the Absolute is not absolute knowledge.

PANTHEISM—to which the position now under consideration brings us—is recommended to many minds by its simplicity (being Monism) and its universality. Exalting the immanence of God, in nature and history, it has, however, sacrificed to this immanence the transcendence of God above all nature and history. It has doubtless helped to break the power of a mere deistic notion of God, as an abstract deity, sundered from the world. But it has done this by a theory which identifies the substance of the world with the substance of the Godhead.

The fundamental postulate of Pantheism is—that

there is one infinite and absolute substance (spirit), of which all relative and finite phenomena are but modifications. Its assumption as to method is—that the development of the Relative and Finite from the Absolute and Infinite can be demonstrated as necessary. And this, of course, implies the further claim, that man can know this Absolute and its processes, because he is kindred thereto.

To show that Pantheism is the final and exclusive system for man would involve the proof of the following three points at least :

(1) That man knows the Absolute ; not as knowing *that* it is, but, *what* it is. Such knowledge can be proved only on the bold assumption that our subjective thought and objective being are identical. With God, thought and being are doubtless coincident. But, in a finite creature, thought can only be the reflex and the echo of being ; and the measure of the thought is not the measure of being, but only of the capacity of the thinker. “Alas for the universe, if it is only as, and what, we know it to be !” (And the radically fallacious theory of knowledge, referred to before, is also here assumed, viz., that we can know only what we are.)

(2) That man can develop the Relative from the Absolute, the Finite from the Infinite, and this by a necessary or demonstrative process. But, in fact, the Absolute and Relative, the Infinite and Finite, are incommensurable ratios ; the idea of the one is contrasted with, rather than deduced from, the other. The relation of the two, in human thought, is neither that of cause or ground to effect, nor that of

a whole to its parts, nor that of the generic to the individual. It being none of these, the process of demonstration (deduction) cannot be logically complete. And besides, the logical law of contradiction, by which alone, in the most consistent systems, this demonstration is attempted, cannot be claimed, without further evidence, to be a law of being as well as of thought. For the principle of negativity is not an efficient agent; it has no productive or generating capacity. Therefore it cannot be the principle of a *real* development. It is not applicable even to physical processes; it cannot explain a spontaneous energy; we cannot by it construct the acts of a personal will. If inapplicable even to the Finite, its scope must be too narrow to embrace the Infinite.

(3) The prime postulate of the system would also require to be proved, viz., that there is only one spirit (absolute and infinite) in the universe, and that all other existences are its modes or modifications; itself unconscious, it is the source of all specific material and spiritual modes of being. The proof of this involves also the proof of the second position, just considered. But it is attended with other difficulties. All that is, the Absolute and Relative, the Infinite and Finite, may doubtless be included in one category, viz., that of *being*. Herein is the truth, and here may perhaps be also found the fallacy of the pantheistic assumption. For as soon as we attempt to pass from the abstract and indeterminate idea of being, to any of its modes, *e. g.*, the material and spiritual, the real and the ideal, we need some *primum mobile*, some developing power, to account for the

developing process. Whence this power? It cannot be deduced from the idea of being; it must then be hypostasized as inherent in being. That is, in order to start, we must have a principle of movement, an act, as well as being. And as it must be an activity equal to all the effects; the Absolute Being itself must contain a causality adequate to each and all the specific effects, of wisdom, power, and moral order manifest in the universe; and how can it contain this, without itself being wise, powerful, and good, *i. e.*, a conscious moral intelligence?

Still further, when we come to the modes or modifications of being, we cannot construe them in thought as having only one identical substance. Take, *e. g.*, spirit and matter; they are defined by contrasted properties; the properties cannot be deduced either from each other, or from one and the same substance. Substance and attributes are correlative. If there are different attributes, we have no warrant for asserting identity of substance. Matter can be derived from spirit only by an act, not by emanation. But Pantheism must make this deduction—by emanation—must prove the identity of substance, or else 'it rests on a mere assumption.

Nor does it avail for the pantheist to say that an Infinite which does not embrace the Finite is not infinite but finite, since it has the Finite for its limit; and so of the Absolute. For whatever difficulty there may be about it, it is equally difficult, on the other hand, for the pantheist or any one else to conceive that the Infinite includes the Finite, that the Absolute includes the Relative, and that the Perfect includes

the Imperfect, without equally annulling the Infinite, the Absolute, and the Perfect. The real problem—equally a problem with pantheist and theist—is not to show that the one includes the other, but rather to show how the transition *must or may be made* from the one to the other. The theist says, by creation—the act of a self-conscious will; the pantheist must say, by emanation—the outflowing of an unconscious substance. Both find here the knot of speculation. But the pantheist is *obliged to demonstrate* the transition; the theist need only show that it is possible to an absolute will, and may grant that the mode is beyond the scrutiny of human science. And while the theist refers all the order and harmony of the universe to a wise and intelligent author, all final causes to the one efficient cause, the pantheist is burdened with the difficulty of explaining how the Intelligent can be derived from the Unintelligent, the Personal from the Impersonal, the Moral from the Neutral, and the whole fair order of the kosmos from a blind, unconscious spirit, which becomes conscious of its rational and moral powers only in and by these products themselves.

(Further: as to the Infinite including the Finite, or else not being the Infinite, it is to be noticed (1) that this could apply only when what is excluded would add to the perfection of the being, (2) that it applies to *quantity* [space and time], not to quality.)

Hence, upon the whole question as to our knowledge of the Infinite and Absolute, it is to be affirmed that our knowledge is neither negative nor absolute, not of the Finite only, nor of the Infinite wholly, but lies between, having elements of both.

## CHAPTER III.

THE SENSE IN WHICH WE CAN BE SAID TO KNOW THE  
ABSOLUTE AND INFINITE—GOD.

THE general result (of the discussion in Chap. II.)—  
or the theistic position—is that—

1. All our knowledge is not derived by induction from the phenomena of sensation; otherwise no God is reached, or only an imagination, a being made in *our* image, an anthropomorphic deity, an illusion—no reality.

2. That man can know the Absolute as well as the Relative, and knows the Relative as relative only because he has a presentiment—a knowledge of the real being of the Absolute.

3. This knowledge is not a negative knowledge, excepting in the sense that it declares that the Infinite is *not* the Finite, the Absolute is not the Relative. It is positive in the sense of the affirmation of real being.

4. While our knowledge is not an absolute knowledge, it is a knowledge of the Absolute. *We can know the real being* of what we are not, know that—not *what*—know, not comprehend. *E. g.* We can know that space is illimitable without grasping the illimitable, or being ourselves illimitable.

God may have some modes or attributes of which we know nothing. Spinoza here is right,\* and cau-

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\* *I. e.*, as far as his method is concerned.



tious, when he says : " The infinite substance may have infinite modes ; of these we know two, thought and extension."

Hence, if we know God, this cannot be by induction, which would give only the sum of the finite ; nor by intuition (direct), else no proof could be demanded ; nor by identification, else we should know no God above the world.

If we know God at all, it is not as we know a stone, or tree, or man ; not as we know a class, an abstract notion, a general idea ; not as we know a nothing or an inconceivability ; but as we can and may know a perfect absolute being—intelligent and personal—the author of the world, and the appropriate object of our love and worship.

We have now the question : *How man comes to the knowledge of God.* In what sense we know Him ; and how we arrive at such knowledge.

§ 1. *Explanatory.* *The question is, How can we know God ?*

This very question implies some knowledge. Unless we had some conception of God we could and would nevermore ask, How can and do we know God ? Unless man had some belief in God he would not ask, any more than an animal, Can you prove His being—can you demonstrate His existence ?

The question implies a need, a craving—seeks for an answer to a demand of our rational and moral being. This is the very least that can be said. There is a strong subjective belief—that is the starting-

point; and the question is, Is there a corresponding objective reality? Are there sufficient grounds for full belief, binding on all rational and moral beings? \*

Hence the question is not at all about knowing some unknown thing, about proving the existence of a mere abstraction—as a theorem in geometry. It is as to the proving the existence of a being in whom, somehow, in some wise, we already believe. It is not going from the known to the unknown—but showing that there are valid and final reasons for a strong, universal, native, human belief.

Proof, in this case, means—and can only mean—that the ultimate truths of our mental and moral being, that all the facts we know about the world without and the world within, that the ultimate ideas and laws of the mind, and the rationale of matter as well—that all our ideas, all our knowledge, all the categories of thought, all the processes of knowledge—agree with, lead to, rest in, the knowledge and worship of the one only living and true God.

So that if we give up God, we give up all that is highest and best in knowledge, the very life of the soul.

To illustrate the character of the proof required, take the case of the parallel (in some sense) belief in an external world. Everybody believes in an ex-

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\* In some respects like, *e. g.*, the question of the real existence of the sun and fixed stars. We believe them—see them. But, it is objected, our senses deceive us; there may be no external world. You think you see it; it is only a sensation—an image—a nervous impression—a motion of the molecules—an irrerecognizable source of transient impression. *Prove* that the sun exists.

ternal world.\* But some sceptic says, there is none; it is all a fleeting shadow, ideas, sensations. *Prove*, if you can, that such a world exists. Then we will believe it, when you demonstrate it by means of some ultimate idea or crucial experiment. How, now, are you to set about *proving* this to him, especially when he says that if you do not, all the natural sciences must be given up as unreal and visionary.†

We tell him there is an irresistible, universal, inexpugnable belief. Yes, he replies, but that is only an idea, a sensation, something purely subjective. Prove, demonstrate your *objective reality*.

How, we ask him, can any one go to work to conduct such a proof in the way you propose? Everything that you know, that you are conscious of, you call a subjective sensation, and demand that we pass from that to something objective. You deny all objectivity, all reality to the object, and then ask us to put that idea into you as a development of the subjective. That *cannot* be done. Nobody can deduce the objective from the subjective. The objective *can only be known*, not deduced.

If you admit the reality of *any objectivity whatever*, there is a basis of argument; but if you do this, you give up the opinion that the objective is to be proved by a process, and confess that it may be known as a fact and ultimate.

We may, can, and must know nature (and God),

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\* Especially do the naturalists who doubt about everything else; else were their vocation emptier than that which they ascribe to the theologians.

† This is what *they* say about *religion*.

because we may, can, and must recognize an objective reality corresponding to some—say only at first some one—of our ideas. Grant this, and the rest follows: deny this, and you fall into metaphysical insanity.

The idea of being as objective is the source and test of all true philosophy.

Admit anywhere, at any point—the smallest—that the subject and object are together in an act of consciousness, and the question is settled. For there, at that point, in that consciousness, idea and reality, thought and being, coalesce. If such objective reality of some of our ideas or beliefs be wholly denied, no proof is possible. Thus, if the barest objective be admitted (the least ray of light), it is inclusively admitted that the two coalesce in a single conscious act somewhere. Hence the belief in the objective world is given directly in consciousness, be that world atoms, or forces, or what it may.

Then to carry on the argument proving the reality, the proof will consist (on the basis of the above admission), in showing that the facts of external and internal experience agree, are counterparts, outside and inside, idea and law, all making up one system.

So, in respect to the proof of the being of God. The reality of being (objective) is the primal consciousness.

In sum : There are two grand spheres, Nature and Spirit. Man belongs to both. In the spiritual, as spirit, he knows God ; in the natural, he knows nature. There are two fundamental metaphysical questions : (1) Does nature exist ; has it a real being ?

(2) Does God (the spiritual in essence) exist, and has God real being? *There is the same question for both. There are the same objections to both.* Man, developed, knows both. What are the grounds of his knowledge? Is there an object corresponding to the subjective belief? Nature *is*, says the naturalist. God *is*, says the spiritualist. *Prove* the existence of nature, says the idealist. *Prove* the existence of God, says the naturalist. The method of proof (so called) must be essentially the same in the one as in the other. Track, know the mode of proof in the one, and in the other is its parallel. What does, or can, *proof* here mean? Disprove God, and by the same argument I will disprove the world. Prove the world, and in a way akin I will prove God.

§ 2. *First Point in the Ascensio Mentis ad Deum.*

The starting-point, the *point d'appui*, the fulcrum is in man's native belief, in the fact that *man is made in the image of God.*

Hence what the mystics call the *ascensio mentis ad Deum*; and there is a natural ascension here as well as a spiritual, an instinctive as well as a reflective knowledge, as is proved by the history of all nations.

What is implied in native knowledge?

Man is made for God—must believe in Him, must know Him. The image seeks its archetype; the reflected light is to be traced back to its source. In this native knowledge of God we have the profoundest instinct, the deepest bent of the human soul.

This does not by itself prove the being of God, objectively. It sets us on the proof: it makes the evidence a matter of the highest concern. It haunts us, as Columbus was haunted and inspired by the vision of the Atlantis beyond the seas. It shapes the question thus: Is there valid and sufficient evidence of the real being of Him whom we worship, of a Reality corresponding with the aboriginal instinct of the human soul?

This instinct, we say, is native to the soul, implanted, *vis insita*.\* Religion is impossible without it; the actual religions prove the belief, as much as works of art prove the existence of the sentiment and idea of beauty; as much as social order, and law, and courts of justice prove the reality of duty and obligation; as much as the existence of governments, states, and nations proves the existence of a social instinct, that government is not by contract, but by necessity.

We call this—and may well call it—a native belief.† We mean by this, that man is *made for God*;

\* Dr. Owen (cited in Haliburton's *Rat. Inq.*, c. 3): "We do not say that men are born with any natural knowledge of God, as they have no knowledge at all when they are born; but we say that they are born with a capacity of knowing him, and that they do not so naturally *know*, as they *feel* this implanted capacity of knowing God, which stirs them up to worship him in some manner. And that this capacity will not less naturally and spontaneously exert itself in adults that are possessed of reason than reason itself."

† In Latin we can say, *Conscientia Dei*; in German, *Gottesbewusstsein*; in French even, *la conscience de Dieu*; not quite yet in English, *consciousness of God*. "Innate idea" also is too definite; it came from the Cartesian metaphysics of simple ideas—clear, distinct—as ultimate.

that all his powers tend to Him; that the right use of all his powers leads to Him; that man's reason, conscience, and affections are satisfied only in Him, that He is the complement of our being; that we, in fact, know ourselves only as we know Him.

The evidence for this "native belief" is—

I. Historical.

II. Psychological (analyzing our powers we find that the highest exercise of all is in religion).

III. Philosophical.

As to I., the *consensus gentium*, the proof of which must of course be derived from history, we cite a few instances and illustrations.

The historical testimony is well summed up in Calvin's Inst., lib. i. ch. 3. Caption: "Dei notitiam hominum mentibus naturaliter esse insitam."

The first sentence: "Quendam inesse humanæ menti, et quidem naturali instinctu, divinitatis sensum, extra controversiam ponimus."

Aristotle (de Cælo, i. 3) says: πάντες ἄνθρωποι περὶ θεῶν ἔχουσιν ὑπόληψιν.

Plato (de Legibus x. contra Atheos) often asserts that "the belief in the god or the gods is a natural, an universal instinct."

Cicero (Tusc. Disp., i. 27) says: "Nec vero Deus ipse, qui intelligitur a nobis, alio modo intelligi potest, nisi mens soluta quædam et libera, segregata ab omni concretione mortali, omnia sentiens et movens, ipsaque prædita motu sempiterno."

Cicero (de Nat. Deor., i. 16), "Quæ est enim gens, aut quod genus hominum, quod non habeat, sine doctrina, anticipationem quandam Deorum, quam

appellat *πρόληψιν* Epicurus, *i. e.*, anteceptam animo rei quendam informationem, sine qua non intelligi quidquam, nec quæri, nec disputari potest.\*

Maximinus Tyrius (cited by Grotius, *de Veritate*, i. § 15) says: "Notwithstanding the great discord, confusion, and debates among men, the whole world agree in this one constant opinion, that God is the king and father of all; but that there are many other gods who are but sent and share in his government. This is affirmed by Greeks and barbarians, by the dweller on the continent and the dweller on the shore."

Prichard (Egypt. Mythol.) shows that the Egyptians believed in a First Cause which was spiritual.

Sharon Turner (History Angl. Sax., App. to Bk. II. ch. 3) says: "Odin's first name was All-Father, though many others were subjoined in process of time."

The universality of belief in God is hardly contested. The array of evidence would fill volumes. As soon as society exists anywhere we find something like forms of worship. The most primitive and most degraded tribes are most *exclusively* under this religious control.†

The general evidence from the *consensus gentium* also contains an objective element (besides the sub-

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\* Conf. de Leg., i. 8; Tusc. Q., i. 13; de Nat., x. 17; Seneca, Epist. 117.

† In reviewing the evidence Benjamin Constant (born at Lausanne, 1767) had a remarkable experience. He set out to write a book to disprove the universal belief in deity, but as he proceeded became convinced of the opposite. He was a disciple of the Encyclopædists. "My work," he says, "is a singular proof of the remark of Bacon, that a little philosophy leads a man to atheism, but a good deal to religion." His book, *de la Religion*, published at Paris, 1824.



jective) that, as a matter of fact, men not only have this internal religious sentiment, but have also believed in the existence of deities, and ultimately of one supreme, divine power. Man's religious feeling is not a mere subjective state, but an aiming ever after an object; as if there were an objective reality corresponding. (This would not directly prove the existence of such an object; but it does prove the fact that men have believed in such.) The religious sentiment aims after and needs an object, just as much as the eyes need light, as the body craves food. That there should be in man such a craving for divinity, and no object corresponding, is as unnatural, as incredible, as that there should be a craving for food and no food to satisfy it. And, in point of fact, we cannot conceive (metaphysically) of an exercise of the religious sentiment without the belief in the objective existence of deities.\*

The most primitive belief of India, seen in the older Sanskrit writings, was doubtless such.† Such was the most ancient Egyptian. (See Kenrick and Prichard.) Cicero, Plato, and Aristotle all confess such, not only as being their own faith, but as being the primitive faith of man. The Indians of America believed in one spirit: Dr. Livingstone finds a similar belief among the tribes of Central Africa. The Mosaic monotheism was a revelation, but it *completed*, unfolded the idea of God; and man's reason, when

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\* As of the question of beauty, etc.

† Cf. Prof. H. H. Wilson, Ed. Rev., Oct., 1860, The old Vedic Religions. Diestel, Der Monotheismus des ältesten Heidenthums, Jahrb. f. d. Theol., 1860.

the idea of God is understood—however received—welcomes it as the truth. So that *ultimately* the belief is in one God.\* So the Mohammedan religion. So of the Christian monotheism. The religious sentiment leads naturally, logically, and only to this one God, where it is rightly educated.

To give specimens of the evidence,† we mention:

The fate behind the Greek drama, and behind the Parsee conflict of Ormuzd and Ahriman.

Athens with thirty thousand deities, longing for the unknown God.

The Eleusinian mysteries.

Eusebius (Præp. Evang.) cites from a lost tragedy of Euripides :

“Thou self-sprung being, that doth all infold  
And in thine arms heaven’s whirling fabric hold.”

On the Sibylline Oracles, see Neand. Ch. H., i. 35. Justin Martyr cites from them this passage :

“One God there is alone, great, uncreate,  
Omnipotent, invisible, seeing all,  
Himself unseen by mortal flesh.”

The passage from the Cilician poet Aratus, to

\* A. H. v. Schlegel. “The more I investigate the ancient history of the world, the more I am convinced that the civilized nations set out from a purer worship of the Supreme Being”—that polytheism was a corruption of this, and that the wise preserved the memory of it.

† See Cudworth’s Intel. Syst.; Warburton’s Div. Leg.; Müller’s Introd. to Mythology; F. W. Schlegel’s Lang. and Wisd. of the Indians; Mosheim’s Early History of Chr’y, i. 17; Neander’s Ch. Hist., i. 536; Kenrick’s Ancient Egypt, i. 302; Ritter, vol. i.; and especially Schelling’s Philos. d. Mythologie, 1856.

which the Apostle Paul is supposed to have referred (Acts xvii.), has been thus translated :

“ From Jove begin we—who can touch the string,  
And not harp praise to heaven's Eternal King?  
He animates the mart and crowded way,  
The restless ocean and the sheltered bay.  
Doth care perplex? Is lowering danger nigh?  
*We are Jove's offspring, and to Jove we fly.*”\*

These phenomena of religion can only be ascribed to this: that there is a subjective religious sentiment or feeling belonging to human nature as such (simple and ultimate), prompting man to seek for God.

No mere external authority could have produced these phenomena and facts of religion in human history.

No “invention” theory will account for them. Men do not invent *what* IS, on such a grand scale. The religions of history are the grand facts of history. And besides, why are the “inventions” received?

The assertion that religion springs from fear does not answer. Whence the fear?

Nor that it is from education. It is through education, not from it.†

Only some native, common religious sentiment can account for the sum of the phenomena.

The very universality of superstition demands of us that we recognize such a ground for it.

\* But see a different version in Turnbull, p. 45.

† The difference between what is given by nature and education is seen in the act of talking and learning the alphabet. Religion is learning to talk.

The native belief in God is equally proved by man's conscious internal experience. All men, at times, have the feeling of reverence and worship springing up in them. They cannot suppress it always; its voice is heard in the great emergencies and changes of life. It shows itself in all men, chiefly in the following forms:

(a) A profound sense of dependence on some unseen and higher power.\*

(b) In the monitions of conscience, suggesting divine judgments for our deeds. This is in all men. So that the divine being is recognized as a moral ruler.

(c) It is also seen in the fact that man will sacrifice to religion all other ties and affections.

II. The second source of proof that the knowledge of God is connatural, is derived from an analysis of human nature itself, showing that the highest exercises of each and all of man's powers is in religion.

There are two points here: (a) The highest exercise of each is in religion; (b) The combined exercise of all is in religion.†

(a) The highest exercise of each.

(1) The intellect. The ultimate analysis here is into the two elements, the infinite and the finite, or the absolute and the relative. These comprehend, in the last analysis, the two extreme terms of our knowledge. We cannot, in thought, either escape or go beyond them. Take away, in thought, all that

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\* Schleiermacher makes this the only element. It is not that—but it is one.

† The first source being the consensus itself, the second, the analysis of this into its subjective and objective elements.

comes from the finite and the limited, and we go back upon and rest in something which is infinite. Take away what is fleeting, and we cannot but think of and believe in something which is absolute.

Whether this infinite, this absolute, be *conceived* of as positive or as negative (which we must by and by ask about), it is still a fact of man's intellect that he believes, and cannot but believe, that there *is* that which is infinite, which is boundless, which is unlimited. The necessity of thought compels to this; we cannot escape it. Everybody who thinks about it believes that as a matter of fact there is something which is not finite, not limited, *e. g.*, space and time. Exceptions *are* exceptions. They arise from yielding the mind too exclusively to physics, or to too much metaphysics. Instances given are such as La Place, some French Encyclopædists,\* Harriet Martineau, Comte,† Epicurus, Leucippus, etc., to show that a number of highly intellectual persons have disavowed belief in God.

The only object of a reply to this objection is to show that the unbelief of such persons does not involve disproof of the general fact.

(a) These are exceptions in their *own* class of

\* Not Voltaire.

† Comte, however, grants, that if an answer *must be had* to the question of the origin of things, the best answer would be an intelligent will; but he says the problem is insoluble. He repudiates the name of atheist, saying that "atheism is the most irrational form of theology."

minds. The greatest minds of all times have been on the other side.

(b) Even these concede the existence of an ultimate power, energy, etc., in unity of action—the most general notion of divinity. Their denial is that of a single personal agency.\*

(c) As degradation may suppress nature, so may a one-sided intellectual or metaphysical cultivation dry up, stifle the soul. This is doubtless possible.

(d) Their scepticism does not at all impair the argument for the point to be established, viz., that a belief in God is native to man. They have suppressed the voice of nature. Their unbelief no more disproves that belief is native than the solitary cases of misanthropes disprove the position that man was made to love his fellows; nor than the case of the idealists disproves the fact that men are by nature impelled to a belief in the independent existence of the material world.†

(e) The reply to this scepticism is in the general argument.

### III. The Philosophical Evidence.

God is the sum of the categories. God is the idea of ideas. God is that which is ultimate in human thought.

The rudiments of the IDEA: being, force, cause,

\* The ancient *atheists* were against the *gods many*; the modern are against one God.

† Cf. Cudworth's *Intel. Syst.*, ch. iv.

Hume's *Essays on the Natural History of Rel.* acknowledge the feeling of dependence on God, but ascribe it to education, disease, etc.

substance—eternal and infinite—truth, beauty, goodness—all in one.

None doubt this except those bound up in sense.

Man may think away external nature, but not infinite and absolute being, in some form.

The only real question to-day is as to personal intelligence and consciousness. The force of force, idea of ideas, sum of the categories—that is confessed by unbelievers to be their God.

The theist claims all this, and more too.

### § 3. *The Shaping of the Argument.*

We have thus our basis in the argument—a primary, universal, instinctive belief, *conscientia Dei*. This is the fulcrum of the lever. Now to frame the argument. What is its nature? What its best form? What is the sense of the argument?

We must come to the knowledge of God as we do to all other real and ultimate knowledge, by the combination of two factors—the intuitional and the experiential; by the union of two methods, the *a priori* (ontological, demonstrative) and the *a posteriori*, the inquisition into the grounds and causes of facts and phenomena.

The meaning of “Argument for the Being of God—”

Not, arguing from the known to the unknown.

The object is to evince the certainty, reality of the idea of God’s being.

The idea is innate: not as complete and distinct, but irresistible mental and moral tendency. It ap-

pears first in the form of feeling, anticipation. Education develops it.

The proofs are the development of this idea, in all its necessity and relations.

The proofs are various ; not because any of them is unconvincing, but on account of the universality of the idea.

All the proofs are one proof or chain of argument. The progress in the proofs is from the more abstract to the most concrete. Ontological, cosmological, teleological, moral, etc., exhibiting it on all sides.

The proof is not of a mere abstract being, but of the existence of the fullness of absolute being.

What, now, are we to prove ?

The existence of an infinite personal Spirit, the author (or Creator) of the world. This is the least we can propose ; it presents the demand in its lowest terms. Two points are involved : (1) The infinitude and personality of this Spirit ; (2) this world (all that is finite) is by and through him. To prove the one without the other is not to prove God. To prove an infinite personal spirit alone is not enough ; to prove an author of the world is not enough ; we must do both to have God, *i. e.*, a being in whom we may trust, who is our God. The two conceptions may be sundered in thought and proof ; there might be an infinite personal being who had no relation to the world ; there might, possibly, be an author of finite phenomena, not an infinite spirit. We need both if the proof is to be adequate.

How, then, shall this proof be conducted ?



It can only be, it seems to me, in the following order and manner :

1. As the starting-point show that man's whole nature and man's whole history prove the need to him of a God; that man by nature and reason is irresistibly prompted to seek for Deity, and cannot else be satisfied. This is not the proof of God's being, but the basis of proof.\*

2. That all the phenomena and facts of the universe (so far as known) demand the recognition of a God as their source and unity—a personal God, the necessary complement of the world.

3. That man's reason (*a priori*) demonstrates the existence of a real, infinite, absolute being.

4. The combination of 2 and 3 gives us the result and proof.

In its ultimate philosophical principles the proof for the being of God consists of three arguments, resting upon three ideas:

(a) The ontological argument, on the idea of being.

(b) The cosmological argument, on the idea of cause.

(c) The teleological argument, on the idea of design.

The so-called ontological is not *a priori* in the sense of from cause to effect, as if the cause of God's

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\* There is a kind of parallel here to Kant's procedure in his Critique of the Pure Reason, against the sceptics, to show, first of all, the necessity and universality of the judgments of pure reason, against sceptics, not yet asking for their objective validity (which is to be established on other grounds). He cuts off, thus, the appeal of sceptics to *reason*, etc., etc.

existence were grasped. It is the argument from being, from the idea of being. *Not a syllogism, rather an analysis.* The only assumption is that of being. The only conclusion—the attributes of being.

In the cosmological argument, the eye is not now on being, but on successions of being; so that all temporal is seen to depend on the eternal, all finite on the infinite, etc.

In the teleological argument, nature, mind, morals, history, reveal the pursuit of ends, above all, of an end.

The contradictory proposition never can be proved.

To *prove* the atheist's position would imply omnipresence, omniscience, eternity, self-existence in him who established the conclusion.\*

All the proofs make one proof; all the arguments make one argument. All are intended to establish the necessity of the divine existence, to explain the universe, so far as we know it.

The proofs need to be enumerated *seriatim* and independently: *e. g.*, in Melancthon's *Loci*, 9, they are reduced to five or six. But all these are only successive aspects and enlargements of the idea of God. Thus, the ontological argument gives the idea of the being of God and its abstract elements as necessary to human thought, the idea of one absolute, infinite Being as the cause of all that is.†

Then the cosmological argument stands between

\* Cf. Pearson. Infidelity.

† See Herbert Spencer's reasonings and concessions; his attempt to reconcile philosophy and theology.

the *a priori* and *a posteriori*, giving the connecting link, the bridge, in the idea of cause.

And then follows the *a posteriori* argument, showing that there is an all-powerful, wise, and good author of the world (all that is finite). The natural sciences, mental and moral constitution of man, history, *consensus gentium* (not *hominum*) testify here.

The decisive force of the argument lies in the combination of the two main aspects of it.

The ontological proves, from our necessary ideas, that there is a Being, infinite, unconditioned, spiritual, the ground and cause of all that is. But it has failed to demonstrate conscious intelligence or personality.

The different forms of the *a posteriori* argument prove that the adequate cause of all that is must be (a) intelligent, rational, wise—because there is intelligence, reason, wisdom, in the whole of creation; (b) must be moral, because there are moral ideas and a moral order in the world itself. But this argument fails to show the infinitude of this cause, and fails to demonstrate that only one personal agency is concerned in all.

*Combining the two*, we have one substance, infinite, spiritual, and the ground and cause of all that is; also, intelligent and moral, or the source of rational ends and a moral order.

The question may arise, what warrants us in making the combination, and saying that the one infinite substance (demonstrated ontologically) is also the cause or source of the rational ends and moral order in creation? We are warranted in doing this for two

reasons: (a) The law of parsimony; requiring a simplicity of ultimate causes. But this is not enough. (b) By the nature of the causative agency, which enters into both arguments equally. Ontologically, we see the necessity of one ultimate causative energy for all that is; and, in the series of *causes* produced by this energy, we find intelligence, reason, and moral order. Hence the causality in the case must be rational and moral.

After all, true knowledge of God is a living, vital knowledge, gained only from communion with Him. It is the highest spiritual vision of the soul. The loss of it is spiritual darkness and death. This we are never to forget and never deny. Religion is not a theory, not metaphysics, not demonstrations—but a life, the life of God in the soul of man.

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## CHAPTER IV.

THE SUPERNATURAL AS THE MIRACULOUS.—THE DOCTRINE OF MIRACLES: \* HERE CHIEFLY PHILOSOPHICAL.

THE Supernatural and the Miraculous are not identical.

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\* References to works. Hume, of course. Campbell, Dissertation on Miracles. Mill's Logic (concedes that a miracle is not against the law of cause and effect). Article by Prof. Smith in Appletons' Cyclopædia. Mozley, 1865 (3d ed., 1872). Wardlaw, 1852. Trench, 1850 (and later). Leslie, Truth of Christianity. Powell, Essays and Reviews (cf. Goodwin, Am. Theol. Rev.). N. W. Taylor, Sects. on Mor. Gov. Mansel, Aids to Faith, 1861. Butler, Anal., Pt. II., c. 2. Whately, Historic Doubts. Douglass, Criteria of Miracles.

The miraculous is one mode or manifestation of the supernatural, as we have already seen. In one sense, in the highest sense, all nature is a manifestation of the supernatural. Creation is the highest miracle (in a general sense). The incarnation and resurrection of Christ are also manifestations of the supernatural. Take the resurrection of Christ and the raising of Lazarus, and the latter is a miracle in the stricter sense. But really, fundamentally, there is the same power, the same idea, the same moral end in both. Unbelief creates a sliding scale as to the whole manifestation of the supernatural. Give up the Scripture miracles, and logically you give up Creation. This is Strauss's position (Old and New Faith), Renan's, and that of the whole modern school. Belief in a personal God and in miracles really stand or fall together in any consecutive logic or theory. Miracles are the revelation of the supernatural in *deed*, as the Bible is in *word*, as Christ is in the incarnation.

Further, miracles are usually discussed only in relation to the evidences—the question being, How far, and in what sense they give evidence of the divine commission of those who claim to be messengers of God. Christ says: "The works that I do bear witness to me." This, undoubtedly, is the strict sense of "miracles." It is necessary, however, to take

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Steinmeyer, *Miracles* (translated, 1875). Dr. A. Hovey, *Miracles of Christ as attested*, 1863. Barnes, *Ely Lectures*. Dr. A. P. Peabody, *Ely Lectures*. Dr. Skinner, *Presb. Rev.*, Jan., 1865. Newman's *Essay*.

them—before they are viewed as evidences—in their most general aspects. Here is the battle ground on the question of the *Supernatural in History*.

Here, moreover, both Christianity and Theism are in the sharpest contrast and contest with the two reigning schools of modern anti-Christian thought—the pantheistic and materialistic—the idealistic and the positive (materialistic—realistic). The impossibility of miracles is with them as an axiom—is the one unproved datum of all their criticism and philosophy. The same is true of evolutionists of every variety. Strauss and Renan both assume this as the basis of their criticism of the life of Christ, rejecting as unhistorical all that is miraculous (without any exception). This unproved postulate we are now to examine.

On philosophical grounds the proposition: A miracle in the nature of the case is impossible, is to be met with the proposition: A miracle is possible, and, on sufficient evidence, credible.

Hume was cautious, arguing against the proof or the possibility of *proving* a miracle; now, opponents are more daring, asserting the impossibility of the miraculous intervention itself. Of course, one who does not believe in a God cannot believe in a miracle as a work of God; as an event it may confound, but cannot convince him.

Strauss says: "The absolute cause never disturbs the chain of second causes by single arbitrary acts, but rather manifests itself in the production of the aggregate of final causalities, and of their reciprocal action." This is well put. (1) He allows that the

absolute cause manifests itself in second causes—which is true. (2) Allows that it produces the chain and all in it—in which he is right. (3) Asserts that the absolute cause produces not as an arbitrary act, that is, not without cause, ground, reason—which is granted. But (4) can we tell *a priori* what and what not the absolute cause may or may not do? If not, it is a question of fact, history, testimony, and the miraculous is not *a priori* impossible.

In the discussion all depends on getting

1. The True Idea of the Miracle.
2. The Possibility of it.
3. Determining when it is Probable.
4. Determining the Actual Proof.

### § 1. *The True Idea of the Miracle.*

As prodigies, wonders, marvels, miracles are almost universally recognized, in all religions.

In the early apologies for Christianity they were not contested in general; objections were made to particular miracles and their proof—not to miracles in general. This mode of viewing the matter prevailed for a long time in the early church; no sharp lines were drawn.

Augustine first brought the idea of miracles under the general notion of order—a part of Providence—a mode of divine working.\*

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\* De Civ., x. 12. "Is not the world a miracle, yet visible, of God's working? Nay, all the miracles done in the world are less than the world itself, the heavens and earth and all that in them is; yet God made them all, and after a manner we cannot conceive."

De Civ., xxi. 8. Miracles are not against nature in her highest

In the New Testament, three words are chiefly used, which may serve as criteria of a miracle :

1. *τέρας*. Marvels, prodigies (never *θαῦμα*), *מוֹפֵת*, marking the effect on the *beholder*.

2. *δύναμις*. Mighty work, marking the *efficiency*, the supernatural element.

3. *σημεῖον*, *תּוֹטָה*, Sign, marking the *purpose* or object, the moral end, placing the event in connection with revelation.

Miracles thus are

Wonderful phenomena, not explicable by known laws or natural agencies (second causes);

The product and evidence of superhuman, divine power;

Designed to give attestation to a divine revelation.

More particularly :

1. A miracle is some event or phenomenon which (in common with all other events) is a fact, an occurrence, subject to observation and testimony. Else there could be no proof of it. The presumption is against it; but this may be overborne by evidence, as far as the alleged fact is concerned. *E.g.* Raising the dead.

The miraculous is doubtless used always in contrast with nature or the natural; but it is not prop-

aspect. "How is that against nature which comes from the will of God, since the will of such a great Creator is what makes the nature of everything? In miracles God does nothing against nature: what is unaccustomed may appear to us to be against nature, but not so to God who constituted nature."

So Abelard: "In relation to God nothing is miraculous."



erly or best defined as a *violation* of the laws of nature, or a suspension. This is, at the best, a negative description, and does not give the attributes of the miracle. It exposes to needless objections. Miracles are *in contrast* with the ordinary laws of nature, are not explicable by them,\* are above them; that is all.

In relation to nature, a miracle is in it, yet not of it, is from a higher source, another power than is seen in the sequence strictly natural.†

It is not necessary to say that *all* the signs and wonders in the Bible are of this decisive, indubitable character; there may be, and is, a great difference among them, and some "wonders" may be explained by natural laws.

Only—There *are* some indubitable ones, some manifestations of divine power which no possible advance of science can explain. There are *Test Miracles*, which admit only of the alternative: Miracle or Fraud. *E. g.* The raising of Lazarus. We should not care if there were only one—that is enough.‡

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\* Thus Spinoza, Tract. Theol.-politicus: "A miracle signifies any work, the natural cause of which we cannot explain after the example of anything else to which we are accustomed: at least he who writes about or relates the miracle cannot explain it."

† As to the ambiguity of "Nature" and "Laws of Nature," see Mill in his "Essays on Religion" (last work).

(a) Nature means: all phenomena and their *causes*. In this sense miracles would belong to nature.

(b) It may mean: second causes—the ordinary course. In this sense the cause of miracles lies outside of second causes.

(c) It may mean: the uniformity of nature, allowing no changes. But this, as we shall see, is no final principle, no absolute law.

‡ As Renan plainly sees and grants.

The question arises : Can God only perform miracles? Wm. Fleetwood (1656–1723, Bp. St. Asaph) in his *Essay on Miracles*, 1701, takes the ground that none but God performs *true* miracles: “ No true miracle was ever performed in opposition to truth.” He was replied to by Bp. Hoadley, 1702 (and by Gilbert).\*

Chalmers has taken the position that created agents may work miracles; that miracles are to be distinguished by their design, not their source, to be tested by the falsehood or truth of the doctrine which they seal.

This evidently denudes the miracle of its value—as an interposition of God.

On the whole, the weight of evidence goes to show that bad men and demons have not wrought real miracles.

The Egyptian enchantments were probably impositions; the man of sin produces *lying* wonders; Samuel may be best assumed to have been raised by divine power, etc. †

It is difficult to believe that God would give a direct power over nature—power to set aside his own ordinances—to evil beings. If the power in question be creative—the power of raising the dead—this would seem to be impossible to be communicated.

\* The reading of these led Locke to write his *Disc. on Miracles*.

† The prohibitions of necromancy and witchcraft do not necessarily involve the recognition of a real control over nature similar to the divine, exercised by demons. Yet it need not be denied that evil spirits have access to some secrets of nature which human science has not reached, and may never reach. Man (and demons) may work the “mirabile,” but not the “miraculum.”

The Scriptures afford the following intimations on both sides of the question :

Only God performs real miracles :

John iii. 2. "No man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." (This, of course, being the opinion of Nicodemus, is not decisive.)

Acts x. 38-40. "Jesus of Nazareth . . . who went about doing good, and healing all that were possessed of the devil ; for God was with him."

John v. 36. "The same works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."

John x. 38. "Though ye believe not me, believe the works."

Matt. xii. 26, 28. —"if Satan cast out Satan"—"if I by the Spirit of God"—

Per contra :

Matt. vii. 22. —"and in thy name have cast out devils," *i. e.*, men rejected at the last have exercised this power. But mark—"in thy name."

Matt. xxiv. 24. —"shall arise . . . false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders." Yet there is no reason why these should not belong only to the class of "mirabilia," and not of "miracula."

Rev. xiii. 13 ; xvi. 14. The same remark applies.

2. Does the progress of science, continually explaining what have heretofore been marvels, establish a probability that the wonders related in Scripture were susceptible of such explanation?

Matthew Arnold \* says : "That miracles cannot

\* In his *God and Bible*, 1876.

happen, we do not attempt to prove; the demonstration is too ambitious. *That they do NOT happen*—that what are called miracles are not what the believers in them fancy, but have a natural history of which we can follow the course—the slow action of experience, we say, more and more shows; and shows, too, that there is *no exception to be made in favor of the Bible.*”

Further: “We have to renounce impossible attempts to receive the legendary and miraculous matter of the Scripture as grave, historical, scientific fact. We have to accustom ourselves to regard henceforth all this part as poetry and legend.” \*

We deny the main point above, viz. :

That the progress of *science* and *experience* does or can show that the miracles recorded in the Bible can be resolved into myths, legends, natural causes, and imagination. Especially will this be impossible in regard to the chief, the *test miracles*, e. g., the raising of Lazarus. The progress of science, so far from favoring the view that this can be explained by natural laws, demonstrates more and more the utter impossibility of doing this. The more we know of nature and science, the more impossible it will be to account for this by second causes.

The progress of science does not leave the alternative, miracle or imagination; it leaves only the alternative, *miracle or imposition.*

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\* Yet Arnold is anxious to keep the Bible, and its hold, after giving up all miracles—the vainest of attempts. Keep Christ and the Apostles, and reject miracles!

3. How is a miracle related to the law of cause and effect ?

It does not contradict—is not inconsistent with that law.

The idea of cause is that of power, efficiency—not mere sequence.\* The law of causality demands that for every event or change in nature there must be an adequate cause, ground, or reason. This is universal—co-extensive with phenomena.†

This law is not violated in a miracle ; there is a cause assigned. Brown ‡ says : “ A miracle is a new effect, supposed to be produced by a new cause.” Mill § concedes, “ that in the alleged miracles, the law of causation is not contradicted.”

Instead of impugning the law of cause and effect, a miracle only postulates a higher than the ordinary causes—a divine power.

4. How are miracles related to the dogma of the uniformity of nature ?

This is the chief point in the debate.¶

Proposition : “ Natural laws are elastic.”

So far as the uniformity of nature implies or involves any *absolute* truth, a miracle does not violate that uniformity :

And, so far as a miracle *does* violate the uniformity of nature, it does not conflict with any absolute truth.

\* The simplest idea of it is seen in the case of willing.

† It does not apply to substance, or first cause.

‡ Notes to Essay on Cause and Effect.

§ Quoted above.

¶ The ablest statement of opponents is Baden Powell's Order of Nature. Reply by Goodwin, Amer. Theol. Rev., 1862.

The uniformity of nature has at least five distinct meanings :

(a) It may mean that the total sum of causes and effects is always the same. This may be true, if in the causes *all* is included—the supernatural, absolute force, God. Miracles are not against this.

(b) It may mean that the ultimate causality always pursues the same order and method of manifestation. This is the *common* view of it, and false, radically opposed to astronomy, geology, history—to all evolution.

(c) It may mean that the same series of merely *physical* causes and phenomena continue invariably the same. This begs the question (materialism), and is refuted by human agency using physical sequences, *destroying* them for use, for beauty, for law, for worship.

(d) It may mean that physical and human sequences together are invariably the same. This is refuted by providence and history.

(e) It may mean that the same causes in the same circumstances will always produce the same effects. This is true, *and the whole truth*. And a miracle does not contradict this. This is all there is to induction and positivism. And who knows all the causes? \*

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\* Mr. Lewes (Problems, ii., 99) calls it an "identical proposition ;" viz., "the assertion of identity under identical conditions ; whatever *is, is* and *will be*, so long as the conditions are *unchanged*; and this is not an assumption, but an identical proposition."

A. Bain (Log. of Deduction, 273) lays it down "as essential that we should postulate or beg the uniformity of nature ;" maintaining

The Scotch school has done great harm to all metaphysics and theology, by hypostasizing the so-called uniformity of nature as an ultimate datum or principle, as an irreducible idea. Whereas, instead of being simple, it is both complex and vague. It has been allowed to play the part of a second god, and finally to many it has become a god.\*

Generally admitted and advanced by Theists, it has proved tolerably safe *with the background of Theism*; but it can be, and has been, used in the interests of modern materialism. Now it is supplanted, in the idealistic schools, by *spirit*, being, force; in the materialistic schools by atoms and forces, or *force*.

The ultimate ideas are: being and cause—being as causal (force, energy). Force is not *final*, it demands a substratum; being (substance) is presupposed. And ultimately all we know of force is from the consciousness of *power* (or causal energy) in ourselves, in *mind*: as applied to external events it is *derivative, symbolic*. And so the uniformity of nature is simply that the same causes in the same circumstances will produce the same effects (as above). "*The logic of unbelief wants a universal*. But no real universal is forthcoming, and it

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that *we could give no reason* for the future resembling the past, but must simply *risk it*, and see if it does not come out so.

Bain (in *Mind*, No. I., '76, p. 146), *vs.* Lewes, says: Lewes "takes no account of differences in space and time," as among "the *conditions*," etc., etc. As if *mere* space and time could alter the real conditions!

\* Cf. Mill in his *Three Essays* (on Nature, Laws of Nature, etc.).

only wastes its strength in wielding a fictitious one."\*

In Hume's noted argument the required universal is silently assumed in the phrase, "unalterable experience." The word "unalterable" begs the whole question. (Hume's objection, however, is really to the *proof*, and not the possibility, of miracles.) "Experience" is indefinite; there is no law in it. Up to a recent period, a train drawn by a steam-engine was contrary to all experience. To affirm that a certain experience is "unalterable," it is necessary to know all the possibilities of experience—which involves omniscience—or to grasp a law which involves the unalterableness.

5. What is the relation of miracles to doctrine, or to the sum of our knowledge of God and his designs?

Besides having an adequate cause, miracles have also a sufficient end or object, and are never to be considered apart from, or dissociated from that.

The Scriptural miracles always stand in this point of view. "Jesus . . . manifested forth his glory." † "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." ‡ "God also bearing them wit-

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\* Mozley on Miracles, p. 61. The following are also instances of the futile attempt to establish such a universal: Spinoza—"Nothing can take place in nature which is contrary to the laws of nature." Powell (Study of Evid., p. 107)—"No testimony can reach to the supernatural." As to the latter position, see Mansel (Aids to Faith, pp. 14, 15, Eng. ed.). One kind of testimony certainly reaches to the supernatural, viz., that of him who performs the work.

† John ii. 11.

‡ John x. 25.



ness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles." \*

Much of the speciousness of modern infidelity is gained just here, by conceiving of the miracle as a mere prodigy, as that which breaks up the order of nature for no object, something altogether baffling to thought in any consistent view of the universe.

There is no greater conceivable object than that which is disclosed in the Christian system of redemption.† A supernatural doctrine may well be attested by a supernatural fact. A supernatural fact not connected in any way with a course of revelation of supernatural doctrine would lack one of the most important marks of the "miracle." ‡

6. What is the relation of miracles to the ordinary exertion of divine power, and to the divine plan?

They are not "single" acts—arbitrary—but are in

\* Heb. ii. 4.

† Mozley (Bampton Lect's, '66) defines a miracle as "a visible suspension of the order of nature for a providential purpose" (p. 6). There must be a purpose; no mere prodigy amounts to a miracle. Miracles differ from special providences, as the latter are "a less obvious intervention of the supernatural" (pp. 8, 211); and special providences are also deficient in the coincidence between the prediction and the fulfillment (pp. 7, 148), which makes up the complete proof of a miracle.

‡ Wardlaw makes *τέρας* chief, *σημείον* incidental; Trench reverses this, testing miracle by doctrine.

In the apologetic age of Christianity, its divine origin was argued chiefly from its moral effects, though this would not show what weighed the most with Christian thinkers, but only what they thought the best adapted to impress their heathen readers. Christ, in vindicating the divine character of miracles, appeals to the whole tenor of his doctrine and work. "If Satan cast out Satan"—

the whole plan of God from the beginning. No new power is required for them, only the same power which produces and sustains all things in another form. They involve no greater power—not so great—as that which built the worlds.

In this view they are not against law, but a manifestation of the very highest law. They argue no want of foresight ; they are no afterthoughts. They are Promethean, not Epimethean.

#### Summary :

The Idea of Miracles is that they have :

An efficient cause—God ;

A final cause or object—to authenticate a revelation ;

A possible attestation—being sensible phenomena, capable of being apprehended and known by men.

Miracles are :

*possible*, if there is a God ;

*probable*, if a positive revelation is needed ; and

*they have been*, if Christ and his apostles can be believed.

Miracles are : direct works of divine power, superseding or using second causes (the ordinary course of nature) for a higher end—for a higher and better manifestation of God—the end for which God made the world.

#### *Definitions of The Miracle.*

*Mozley* : \* “The chief characteristic of miracles,

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\* On Miracles, p. 149.

and that which distinguishes them from mere marvels, is the correspondence of the *fact with the notification*; what we may call the prophetic principle. For, indeed, if a prophecy is a miracle, a miracle, too, is in essence a prophecy; the essence of which is the correspondence, not the futurity, of the event."

*Bacon*: \* "There never was a miracle wrought by God to convert an atheist; because the light of nature might have led him to confess a God; but miracles are designed to convert idolaters and the superstitious, who have acknowledged a Deity, but erred in his adoration; because no light of nature extends to declare the will and worship of God."

*Spinoza*: † "Miraculum significat opus cujus causam naturalem exemplo alterius rei solitæ explicare non possumus, vel saltem ipse non potest qui miraculum scribit aut narrat." ‡

*Alexander* § gives the following *classification* of all the definitions which have been framed:

1. From the point of view of the agency employed in their production.
  - a. Divine, only.
  - b. Superhuman.
2. From that of their relation to the course of nature.
  - a. As violating all natural laws.
  - b. As not violating but superseding laws.

\* Adv. Learning, B. 3, c. 2.

† Tract. Theol., c. iv., 67.

‡ So Wegscheider, De Wette. Schleiermacher denied that miracles proved truth or the commission of the worker.

§ Christ and Christianity, App. D.

3. From the view of their effect or design.

*a.* As producing wonder.

*b.* As producing faith (religion being the test).

4. From their relation to our ignorance.

*Aquinas* (one of the best as far as it goes): "Nothing can be contrary to the order of the world, as it proceeds from the primal cause;" but if we look at the order as it is grounded in the cosmical chain of causes and effects, then God may bring something to pass *præter ordinem rerum*; for he is not limited to this series of causes and effects. Hence: "*Miracula sunt omnia quæ divinitus fiunt præter ordinem communiter servatum in rebus.*"

*A sufficient definition:* A miracle proper is an event in the course of nature—not to be accounted for by natural laws—produced by divine power, in attestation of the personal divine commission of him who works it.\*

§ 2. *The Possibility of Miracles.*

This *possibility* is exactly measured by the real belief in the Being of God—as a Personal, Conscious

\* On the question, How does the miracle prove the credibility of the worker? see Dr. Thornwell (*So. Presb. Rev.*, Aug., '56, p. 355). The worker appeals to God as a witness.

(*a*) It is an example of the supernatural.

(*b*) It is an example of the precise kind of the supernatural which it is advanced to confirm. Wardlaw (p. 32-3), "The prophecy is a miracle of knowledge—the miracle is a prophecy of power."

(*c*) God's character would not permit such audacity as is implied in working miracles by a bad man.

"That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins"—prophecy of power. Mark ii. 10.

Intelligence. It is as vital as religion itself—or prayer ; though prayer be not a miracle, yet both belong to the same order of conceptions—both involve belief in the reality, presence, and power of the *Supernatural* in History. The degree is different, but the order of facts is the same, *i. e.*, the supernatural order, a *living sense* of God's presence and power.

If there be a Personal, Intelligent, Omnipotent, and Holy God—the author and governor of the world—it is possible that, to answer the end for which the world was made, he may intervene by miracles. If the being of God is on the whole only the most credible hypothesis as to the origin, course, and end of the universe, miracles may be congruous therewith.

In such a universe the physical must be in and for moral and spiritual ends—the world for God—man for God—God the end of creation. To manifest his full power and glory, for, in, and by his creatures, there may be need of supernatural intervention, or, at any rate, such an intervention is possible.

This does not here require further illustration.

The anti-Christian theories, on this point, either wholly beg the question, or come under the necessity of establishing the inherent incredibility, the physical and metaphysical *impossibility of the miraculous*. In the face of the general belief, the impossibility must be proved if the possibility is denied. (We do not yet speak of the probability or the actuality, but only of the general possibility.)

This proof cannot be conducted : the claim is only an assumption, as violent and arbitrary as any that

can be made; involving a *denial* of all supernaturalism—the affirmation of Nihilism and Nescience at the root, not only of our knowledge, but also of the universe itself. Even if God be only possible, miracles have a derivative possibility.

These anti-Theistic theories—materialistic or pantheistic—or both—or neither—assume, in common, the following points:

1. That all we can directly know is, certain sensations or subjective phenomena. This is the indubitable.

2. That all we can do with these sensations or phenomena is, to state them in some general rule or so-called law—which only means, that we combine the separate facts in one general statement.

3. That as to the cause or source of these phenomena or facts, all that we can do, “scientifically,” at the utmost, is to refer them to some unknown, inconceivable, indefinable substance, cause, or source. Some deny even this.

4. That this ultimate substance, cause, or source evolves or develops the phenomena by a necessary law—evolution—which is always at work in the same order. Here is a difference. *A* says: This evolution is of atoms and forces, but both material; *B* says: This evolution (development) is not material (atomic), but spiritual—as force. Yet it is an unconscious force.\* *C* says: It is neither spiritual nor material, but some tertium quid, hybrid, both in one: that spirit and matter are different sides of the same

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\* Von Hartmann.

facts. But all say: It is a Mode of Being, unconscious, non-intelligent, non-ethical.

5. That this evolution is for some end. There is a question here among anti-theistic theorists. Positivists deny (in terms, while their position all the while demands) final cause or end; Mill hesitates. But all who admit radical evolution virtually admit final cause: for what is *evolution* without end or beginning? It is simply atoms in motion, and time and space. The end, however, is not contained in thought, in plan, in the original sense, but just comes to be, somehow or other, because it could not help it.

This is the sum and substance of the present theory against the possibility of miracles.

Now, if this theory is not true, miracles are possible. Hence we go on to consider the dogma of *Evolution* in relation to the origin and end of creation.\* [The author intended to do this in the Ely Lectures for 1876.] See APPENDIX III., Outline of Prof. Smith's Intended Lectures on Evolution.

### § 3. *The Probability of Miracles.*

Only the outline of discussions will be given here; the full treatment belongs to Historical Apologetics.

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\* If there is a Personal God,  
 if Nature is not God,  
 if Atoms and Forces are not all,  
 if the spiritual is as real as the natural,  
 if the moral is above the natural,  
 if there is a moral government,  
 and a moral end (even if only "generally tending to Righteousness," in Matthew Arnold's phrase); then  
 Miracles are possible.

The argument is manifold and combined :

1. The two general positions ; Theory of the Universe :

*a.* God is Holy and a God of Law ;

*b.* Man is a moral being, made for God ; and this world is for moral ends, under a moral government.

2. The Actual Condition ; the Historical State of Mankind :

The end is not reached, yet is in process and progress.

The two great facts of sin and of the need of redemption. Man's moral nature, though perverted, asserts itself. Conscience testifies to his sin and need. The need is of God's interposition. It is met in the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Redemption in Christ.

3. The special state of the world at Christ's coming, and preparation for that coming.

4. History since : Christianity the center of History. Christianity beneficent.

The evils of Christianity are the evils of human nature contesting against it.

The probability of miracles is of the same order and degree as the probability of the truth and need of the Christian system.\*

\* Butler, Anal., Pt. ii., c. 1, 2.

Paley's position : There is the same probability of miracles as of a revelation.

The " Truth " of Christianity lies in its correspondence with the character of God and his plan, and in its proved historical adequacy to meet the entire " need " of man.



§ 4. *The Proof of Miracles.* (Here only outlined.)

The witnesses—numerous—had full opportunity of observing, were honest, unimpeachable—give full details (no thaumaturgic reserve), shaped their whole lives by the supernatural facts and doctrines which they relate, suffered, and (many of them) died in attestation, which is notably true of Christ and the apostles.

The miracles were visible, audible—public in the face of foes, of many witnesses.

The question coming up here is as to the possibility of proving miracles and the nature of the proof actually afforded; whether, *on general grounds*, it is to be deemed valid.

The real question is, not whether there is enough testimony, but whether any possible degree of testimony can prove a miracle.

The testimony of the miracle-worker is the decisive element. He *testifies* to the supernatural. Is he then credible?

As miracles are appeals to the senses, to “experience,” testimony is the only mode of proving them *to us*. The proof to those who witness them is the evidence of the senses; the proof to us, their testimony. The Scriptures *say* that the miracles are from God. Testimony here may be valid, unless one assumes that it is not, and if this *be* assumed, the procedure is suicidal; “going to testimony to show that testimony cannot be depended on.”\*

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\* The assumption can only be based upon the fact that the mass of human testimony goes to show that miracles have not occurred within

The proof of miracles, *as far as testimony goes*, is complete.

The two chief objections to the proof :

(a) It does not reach to the divine agency. To show that an event lies out of the range of the causes which man knows of, is not to show that it lies beyond the range of all second causes, and to trace it to the direct energy of God. (b) Testimony, from the nature of the case, cannot prove a miracle. The evidence that the sequences of nature are unbroken is stronger than mere human testimony to any facts can be.

(a) Such proof as we have respecting miracles does not reach to the divine agency.

(1) It is said that in affirming the occurrence of a miracle, we virtually claim that we know all the laws of nature,\* since the miracle is defined as being above or contrary to all those laws.

Reply: We need not know all nature to be certain that *some events* are entirely above nature; *e. g.*, raising the dead, curing the blind with a word. Observation and experience have given us the limitations of nature in *certain directions*, though not in all.

If *we* do not know enough of the laws of nature to decide that a miracle has occurred, infidelity does not know enough of them to decide that it has not.

the experience of the vast majority of men. If the (unimpeachable) testimony of those who have observed miracles is to be rejected, the testimony of those who say they have not seen them is to be neglected.

\* The substance of Rousseau's objection to miracles.

There may be direct proof that the miracle is from divine power, in the way of the testimony of the miracle-worker, he being entirely credible; *e. g.*, Christ and apostles.

(2) It is said that what are deemed miracles may be due to occult agencies in nature merely, as magnetism, etc.

Reply: No such are proved to be available, or are even conceivable in, *e. g.*, the raising of the dead.

If occult natural agencies were employed, the efficiency would not be in them, but in the will which controlled them.

The testimony of Christ is explicit. "If I by the finger of God"— "Father, I thank thee that *thou* hast heard me." \*

(3) Another form of (2). It is said that the Scriptures recognize the fact that the miracle-worker may do what to others is miraculous, yet not by divine aid; may know secret powers, etc. Deut. xiii. 1-3. "If there arise among you a prophet . . . and giveth thee a sign, . . . and the sign *come to pass*, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, . . . thou shalt not hearken." (So Matt. vii. 27; xxiv. 24; 2 Thess. ii. 9, quoted before.)

Reply: The Scriptures describe these as lying wonders, false signs.

The criterion is, that they are against the truth. Then—

(4) It is said that the Scriptures would prove truth by miracles, and miracles by truth. No, we reply:

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\* At the raising of Lazarus. John xi. 41.

the evidence that these are not true miracles is that they undertake to support false doctrine. It is a part of the evidence—not *the whole*—of true miracles, that they are “for the truth.” It is a part—not the whole—of the evidence for the truth that it is attested by miracles. The single circumstance that alleged miracles are for the truth does not prove them to be true miracles; but their being against the truth proves them to be false.\*

On the whole, under Obj. (a).

That the proof does reach to the divine agency is involved in the testimony, especially of Christ; all centers there in him, and his disciples derivatively.

Obj. (b). No amount of testimony can prove a miracle. This is Hume’s noted objection: No evidence can establish the fact of a miraculous occurrence; there is always greater probability that men are deceived or deceivers, than that a miracle has taken place; for testimony has, nature has not, deceived.† He says: “A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature, and, as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined.”‡

(It follows that the progress of science has nothing

\* The excellency of doctrine agrees with—does not prove—the divinity of the miracle; the divinity of the miracle establishes the excellency of the doctrine, yet never so but that the excellency is also seen in its own light.

† Hume does not deny the abstract possibility of miracles. Admits this in *Essays*, ii., pp. 131, 132. (Edinb. ed., 1788.)

‡ *Phil. Works*, iv., 133.

to do with the argument—it is the same always; *i. e.*, there is a metaphysical impossibility of proving miracles. But the progress of science, in fact, makes Christ's miracles appear still more supernatural, since nothing adequate to perform them is discovered.) \*

The best replies † to Hume :

If “experience” means universal experience, it begs the question.‡

The objection proves too much. Proves the impossibility of establishing any new event. Proves that the fact of creation cannot be believed on any testimony of God, *coming through men.*

The objection assumes a violent probability against miracles. But “under the circumstances,” etc., the fact is the reverse.

Hume separates the miracle from its object. A miracle with him is a miracle merely, not a miracle of Christ for the redemption of men.

Hence the probability against the Christian miracles is based upon sceptical ground, *taken in advance.*

His objections to testimony cannot apply to Christ and his apostles. It is more difficult to believe that *such men* § were deceivers than that the sequences of nature are “alterable.”

\* So Mansel, *Aids to Faith*, p. 13.

† See Campbell, Paley, *Encycl. Brit.*, Babbage, Vaughan, Chalmers (*Evid.*, Bk. I., c. 3), Rogers (*Edin. Rev.*, 1849).

‡ The experience of any *who were present* when unimpeachable witnesses testify that miracles were wrought, and did not see them, might be brought forward with effect.

§ Archb. Whately has written with force upon this point. On the

Newton, certainly equal to Hume in his power of estimating what is involved in the uniformity of nature, thus qualifies the "immutability of the laws of nature:" "nisi ubi aliter agere bonum est."\* The "uniformity of nature" is not a rational, necessary truth. The uniformity of physical law gives way under the impulse of man's free will, whenever this is duly put into the line of causes; *a fortiori* it will under God's.†

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other hand, a singular proof of the incapacity of some minds to see the decisive feature in testimony is afforded in the writings of one Craig, a Scotchman, who wrote, in 1699, a 4to pamphlet, "Theologiae Christianæ, Principia Mathematica," proving that on its present evidence Christianity could be received until A. D. 3153.

\* See paper on the Immutability of the Laws of Nature, in Lond. Quart. Rev., Oct., 1861.

† So, in substance, Mansel, Aids to Faith, pp. 18, 19; see, also, Dr. A. P. Peabody, Chris. Exam., Nov., 1856.

## APPENDIX I.

### SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF APOLOGETICS.\*

*From an Article by Prof. Smith in the "Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review," July, 1876.*

THE Italian philosopher, Giovanni Battista Vico, the founder of the modern philosophy of history, and one of the ablest and most comprehensive of the

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\* Works. *Apologetik. Wissenschaftliche Rechtfertigung des Christenthums.* Von J. H. A. Ebrard, Dr. Phil. et Theol. 2 Theile. Gütersloh, 1874-5.

*System der christlichen Apologetik.* Von Franz Delitzsch. Leipzig, 1869.

*Christliche Apologetik auf anthropologischer Grundlage.* Von Christ. Ed. Baumstark. Erster Band [all published], Frankft. a. M., 1872.

K. H. Sack, *Christliche Apologetik.* Hamburg, 1829. [Second edition, 1841.]

Von Drey, *Apologetik als wissenschaftliche Nachweisung des Christenthums in seiner Erscheinung.* Mainz, 3 Bde. 1844-1847. (Roman Catholic.)

Werner, *Geschichte der apologetischen und polemischen Literatur.* 5 Bde. 1861-67. (Roman Catholic.)

Dr. Fr. Düsterdieck, *Der Begriff und die encyclopädische Stellung der Apologetik*, two instructive articles in the *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie*, 1866. Dr. Düsterdieck is a Consistorial Counsellor in Hannover.

Theod. Christlieb, *Modern Doubt and Christian Belief.* Transl. by Rev. H. U. Weitbrecht, etc. New York, 1874.

Luthardt, *Apologetic Lectures.* Three series: *On the Fundamental, the Saving, and the Moral Truths.* Transl. Edinb.

philosophers of the eighteenth century, develops, in his Principles of the New Science, a theory of civilization embracing what he calls the *Law of Returns*. Each age runs its appointed course and dies; and after a long period there will be a return of the same process. Though this cannot be called a final law of history (since it neglects too much the law of progress), yet it shows us one of its marked conditions. At different periods, widely sundered, we find similar historic laws, though working under different conditions. The early literature of Christianity was apologetic. The same is true of the present literature of Christianity in almost all its departments. We, like the early church, live in an apologetic era. There is hardly an effective theological work, we might almost say, hardly any great Christian discourse, which does not take on an apologetic stamp.

## I.

As has been said, Christian Apologetics is essentially Vindication. It seeks to vindicate, and in vindicating to establish, the value and authority of the Christian faith. It begins, in fact, with the Scriptures, the epistles, and especially the discourses of Paul. In Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, and other Christian writers, it received more distinct form, proposing to defend Christianity against all gainsayers. All that belongs to the proof of the Christian religion, and all that belongs to its defense, and all that belongs to its counter-attack against its foes, is a part of Apologetics.

We sometimes think it strange—it almost alarms



us—that Christianity should be so desperately assailed ; but when we come to think about it, it is the most natural thing in the world. Evil will always attack good ; error instinctively assails the truth ; sin, by its very nature, is opposite and opposed to holiness. Incarnate Love was crucified between two thieves ; and the church cannot expect to be better treated than its Head and Lord—it is surely enough for the servant that he be as his Master. Men who cannot find God in nature cannot find God in the Bible. Men who deny the supernatural must consider all religious faith a delusion. Even a heathen might *go on* and find God, but a materialist must *go back*, deny himself, in order to find him. As long as there are sin and unbelief, so long there will be attacks on Christianity ; and there must needs be a defense also.

And this, too, is to be considered : that as knowledge grows, as science extends, as the boundaries of investigation and thought are enlarged, man's restless and inquisitive intellect will always be framing new theories about something or other, or about everything. And each infant Hercules must first fight it out with his nurse. Christianity has bred all the new aspirants for omniscience ; and the young men and women wish to show that they are wiser and stronger than the authors of their being. This, too, is quite natural. Nor is it all wholly sinful. These sciences and philosophies and criticisms have a right to be ; and if Christianity cannot make good its ground against them—where they oppose it—cannot approve itself as wiser, stronger, and better—it

must so far forth give place to them. If it cannot appropriate all that is good and true in them (however *new* it may be), and still preserve its lordly sway, then it is *not* the wisest and best system for mankind, and will give place to what is better. But it has the prescriptive right of possession and favor; its roots are imbedded in the depths of the broad earth, and wind round among its ribbed rocks, and its branches wave high, overshadowing and fruitful, so that the nations of the earth lodge beneath them. And infidelity has got to dislodge them before it can even begin to build its own temple on and with the ruins. Neither the end of the world nor the end of Christianity seems to be very near yet; and there is still a fair chance that the world may end first.

The necessity and importance, now, of the diligent and specific study of Apologetics is seen in part just here, viz.: in this constant progress of the human race in knowledge and in aspiration; in the advance of the sciences and arts, of culture and civilization; in the successive and comprehensive schemes of philosophic speculation, wherein thoughtful men struggle with the grand problems of nature and of humanity, and try to solve them. What is the world? Whence is the world? For what is the world? Whence is man? What is man? and for what? These questions have stirred men's minds from the dawn of thought—elevating, perplexing, often confounding, yet always impelling them. In the darkness of the labyrinth which we call life, the groping hand has been ever in search of the clue no eye could see—feeling after God, if haply it might find him.

What wonder if here many go astray, especially those whose eyes are blinded by reason of sin. What a marvel, that, in spite of every defeat, and of innumerable false lights, the same search is going on from age to age! A new question for every new generation! Yea, a new question for every new soul, struggling in the throes of its higher spiritual birth.

And every new science and every new philosophy—still dealing with the same old, old questions—views them in some new light. And hence the necessity of a renewed, an honest, a patient investigation.

It *is* true that the questions are ever essentially the same: for God and man and the universe remain essentially the same from age to age; and the questions are ultimately about them and their relations. It is true that the substance of faith and the formal nature of unbelief remain the same, and that sin is sin, and holiness is holiness only, and forever.

But it is not true that the form of the conflict or its weapons remain, or can remain, the same; these change with the changes of age and nations and philosophies, just as much and as surely as do the armaments of war.

Hence, Apologetics as a system must, to a certain extent, be reshaped, in each century, with each new class of opponents, so as to adapt Christianity to each new age, and to exhibit its inherent superiority over all that can be brought against it.

And this subject is forced upon us anew every day, not only in works of learning and philosophy, but also in the current popular literature. Many a popu-

lar lecturer owes a part of his success to his covert, when not open, attacks upon the Christian system. This shape of evil, this substance of infidelity, often realizes the great poet's apt description of its progenitor :

“ If shape it might be called, which shape had none  
 Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb ;  
 Or substance might be called, that shadow seemed,  
 For each seemed either.”

And the very fact that infidelity is so subtle and so persuasive, is only another reason for studying it well and understanding its weapons and its arts.

## II.

In discussing so wide a subject, there must, of course, be a selection of certain special points. At present we propose to consider briefly the elements of the conflict—some of the different phases through which attack and defense have hitherto run, and a statement of the main topics embraced in a course of Christian Apologetics. And it will be found that there is in its career a kind of logical process—at any rate, such logic as there is in the development of a system of truth through and by antagonisms—which seems to be one of the laws of all terrestrial progress.

The term infidelity, in its most general usage, covers both skepticism and unbelief ; it expresses both the state of doubt and the state of denial, which, though differing in some respects, are often passing over into each other. Doubt tends to denial ;

it is not always such. The state of doubt in respect to religious realities is different from, though often confounded with, that philosophical disposition which leads to inquiry and investigation; since the latter is chiefly intellectual, while the former is essentially moral, in its nature. When men come to doubt about or deny sin and judgment, the moral law and the moral law-giver, their moral perceptions are already obscured or benumbed. Infidelity consists in the doubt or denial of those moral and spiritual truths upon which moral judgment and personal accountability are dependent. Man is accountable for his belief just so far as any moral truth influences his judgment—just so far as his decisions have respect to sin or holiness.

The Christian faith, having its ground and essence in the spiritual realm, appeals directly to man as a spiritual and religious being, as made for God, and in the image of God. And it especially addresses itself to man's sense of sin and need of redemption. It is, in its very nature, a redemptive system; all that is in Christ, in his relation to us, centres around and in the question of redemption from sin. If sin and punishment are denied, Christ and salvation must consistently be denied. And accordingly, we find in the whole history of Christianity, that here, in the last analysis, the battle has been fought in every believing and unbelieving soul, in all the ages of faith and all the epochs of infidelity. Any system of philosophy, any speculation, any tendency which weakens the sense of sin, also weakens the power of Christianity, and gives to infidelity an easier victory.

Still further, the Christian system is, in its very nature, a *supernatural* system—above nature in its origin, its processes, and its results; for it is from God, and it works for eternity. It works with and through the seen and temporal, but it works also above and beyond all that greets the eye of sense. It makes the spiritual and the eternal to be the *grand realities*, and the tangible and temporal transient and shadowy in comparison. The supernatural element is not to be found—as some would have it—merely, or even chiefly, in the sphere of the will (for such a supernaturalism a mere naturalist need not deny)—but it is essentially found in those divine truths and realities (the most real of all that is) which come from God through a specific revelation, for the elevation and restoration of the lost race of man. And it is this supernatural element of the Christian faith which has always provoked the assaults of unbelief; for man, through the power of sin, is involved in spiritual darkness, as well as made subject to a distempered will.

Here, then, are the essential elements of the conflict of all ages. On the one hand, a supernatural and redeeming system centering in one Incarnate God; on the other hand, man, loving the sin inborn and inbred, and blind to the light which streams out from the heavenly places. The one rests ultimately in God, making the divine wisdom and glory, as they are the source, to be also the end, of all things; the other has its roots in human nature—as it now is—and makes man's needs the great impulse, and man's well-being the great end, of all our striving. The

whole alphabet of the one—its Alpha and Omega—is God in Christ ; the other uses the whole alphabet to syllable the desires of man, or express the facts of nature. The former echoes with the sharpest emphasis the wail of humanity, groaning under its body of sin and death, haunted by a sense of sin profounder than all our other experience, so that its cry is and must be : Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? The latter feigns that sin is a negation, or a process of education, and repentance and regeneration purposes of man's will alone, and redemption a gradual progress in moral culture. Unbelief has on its side not only all our natural desires, but also their main bias, their partial and limited ends ; while faith is obliged to contend against and overcome the natural man, its victory is the overcoming of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and these do not yield without violent throes and conflicts. The one finds in natural reason, in its laws and processes, the limits of all knowledge ; the other is satisfied only when, in the darkness of nature, it can feel that it is touching the right hand of God, and that, though itself is blind as to the future, it is led by one who sees the end from the beginning. As Wordsworth—that truly Christian poet—has well sung :

“ No ! let this age, high as it may, install  
 In her esteem the thirst that wrought man's fall.  
 The universe is infinitely wide,  
 And conquering Reason, if self-glorified,  
 Can nowhere move, uncrossed by some new wall  
 Or gulf of mystery, which thou alone,  
 Imaginative Faith, canst overleap  
 In progress toward the fount of Love.”

## III.

The elements of the contest being thus given, on the one hand in the supernaturalism and redemptive grace of the Christian system; and in the love of sin and the pride of reason on the other; and these being the strongest of contestant agencies, it is not wonderful that we find the history of the church, yea, the very history of mankind, to be a record of this immortal battle in different and progressive stadia.\* All the philosophical and religious systems of the ancient world, and every new system—physical and metaphysical—have enlisted in this, as yet ineffectual, warfare against the victorious progress of the Incarnate God. The battles of empires and of races are but mimic mock-fights, in comparison with this intenser conflict between the underlying and mightiest powers that sway the destiny of the race.

First of all, to rehearse these spiritual wars in a rapid outline: there was the subtlety of the Greek speculation, and the pride of the Hebrew legalism; the cross was to the Jew a stumbling-block, and to

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\* Dr. Werner's *History of Apologetics* is the fullest general account, though based on Roman Catholic views. The last volume contains a more minute history of the English deistic works than is to be found elsewhere—on some points more complete than Leland. He is a voluminous writer, the author of the *History of Roman Catholic Theology in the Munich Geschichte und Wissenschaften*, of a *History of Arianism*, etc. The well-known smaller works of Bolton on the *Early Apologists*, and Farrar's *History of Free Thought*, as well as the sketches of the later *German Theology*, by Hagenbach, Schwarz (4th ed.), and Kahnis (new ed., 1875, in two volumes), must of course be consulted as well as Buckle and kindred authors.



the Greek foolishness ; while to them that believed, it was the wisdom and power of God unto everlasting life. Against these foes the Christian literature of the second century became to a large extent apologetic, and as such, both offensive and defensive. Against the Jew the object was to show that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah, and that the law was not only abolished, but also fulfilled, in the Christian dispensation. Against the heathen there was a wider range of argument to refute their objections, that Christianity was a new religion, and that it was irreligious and immoral (*superstitio exitabilis*—a detestable superstition), and that it claimed to be, what no heathen believed possible, a religion for all mankind. This last, for example, was one of the strong objections of Celsus ; a pagan of the classic world could believe in a universal empire, but not in a universal religion. To meet these and similar objections, we have in the second century the admirable apologies of Justin Martyr, Tatian's Oration against the Greeks, the anonymous epistle to Diognetus (going often under the name of Justin, yet certainly not by him), one of the most admirable remains of early Christian literature, far surpassing the works of the so-called Apostolic Fathers. To these in the same century were added the writings of Athenagoras, of Theophilus of Antioch, and, in the latter part, the great names of Clement of Alexandria, and the fiery and struggling genius of Tertullian, who, in the name of Christ, conquered the Latin tongue,\* and made it speak the words of faith.

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\* Hooker speaks of Tertullian as "a sponge steeped in vinegar

But heathenism was not willing to part with its gods without a more desperate struggle. It gathered up all its resources for attack and for defense. In the city of Alexandria, Greek, Roman, and Jew all met ; and there was framed out of this confluence an eclectic system, a New Platonic school, the object of which was to show that Christianity lacked the elements needed to secure supremacy and universality. It was a movement wonderfully akin to some tendencies of our own times. Celsus, Porphyry, Proclus, Plotinus, and Julian are the prototypes of some Frenchmen and Germans, not to say Englishmen and Americans of to-day. Celsus, for example, who has been much overrated, because the adamantine Origen replied to him, says, that in the Greek wisdom we have the true *logos*, the Messiah ; that this fair world (*kosmos*) is the true Son of God ; that Christianity leads to social disorders ; and that the only way of keeping up law and nationality is by propping up the pillars of the old temples.\* Porphyry, too,

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and gall." The remains of Celsus (A.D. 178) have been admirably restored by Dr. Keim of Zurich, in his *Celsus' Wahres Wort*, 1873, and compared with Lucian and Minucius Felix. *The Plea of Athenagoras*, admirably edited by Prof. March, of Lafayette College, is included in the *Douglass Series of Greek and Latin Writers*, vol. v. Of course, the hints here given of the history of Apologetics are meant to be only references.

\* On the difference between the early Greek and Latin Apologists, there is a striking statement by the late Dr. Hundeshagen, in an admirable address, as Pro-Rector, at the birthday celebration of the Duke of Baden, in Bonn, Nov. 22, '60 : "As the Greeks contended for the assailed cause of Christianity on rational grounds, with appeals to Socrates, Plato, and other coryphaei of philosophy, so did the Latins on grounds of right and justice, and with citations from the

objects, that the Christian faith interrupted the historical continuity, and introduced barbarism. Finding how the personal power of Christ was silently and surely working (*e. g.*, Origen says, that He, unlike others, represents the sum and perfection of all the virtues), these pagan assailants looked about for an ideal man to set up in his stead, and brought forth Pythagoras, to whom distance lent enchantment; and Apollonius of Tyana, the juggling impostor, the best that heathenism could find, and quite as good as some of the objects of the fashionable worship of genius in these later days. Then, at last in Julian, the apostate, Julian, the emperor, the philosopher, and the priest, we have the union of all the resources of the ancient world against the growing forces of Christianity: the state against the church, philosophy against faith, the old culture against the new; the host of stars of the polytheistic canopy of night, in contrast and contest with the rising sun of the new and better day. Julian, with the zeal of a fanatic, attempted to revive the old pagan enthusiasm, representing heathenism as world-historical, and Chris-

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Roman laws. With the former, the salient thought held up against opponents is always the evidence for the *truth* of Christian doctrine; the latter make prominent the bearings of Christianity upon the injured rights of the individual and of society. 'All the early Latin apologists were *advocati*, versed in law. Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, and Ambrose, the former Proconsul of Aemilia and Liguria, had all of them been Roman *Causidici*, and teachers of legal eloquence; they were all men who received their special mental, as well as their general, character, not from the divisive and uncertain philosophy of the Greeks, but from a solid and firm training in the service of the Roman State.'

tianity as a conventicle and a sect; and, if truth is to be settled by mere tradition and numbers, he undoubtedly had the right of it. Christianity, too, he said, was but a mixture of Judaism and heathenism, retaining their worst elements; for example, taking from Judaism what Julian calls its atheism (*ἄθεότης*), that is, its belief in *one* God; and also that adventurous faith which leaps the gulf between the finite and the infinite. But in vain did Julian prostitute all the power of the State to help the debased deities; in vain did he borrow from Christianity some of its benevolent institutions, and engraft them upon heathenism; in vain did he himself offer sacrifices as the Pontifex Maximus, and preach, and lead even an austere life; flames and an earthquake kept him from building the temple of Jerusalem, whereby he attempted to disprove the prophetic word; and he himself, with his expiring breath upon the plains of Persia, could only say, according to the tradition: "Thou has conquered, O Galilean!" The great victory over the whole external civilization, as well as over the speculations, of the ancient Greek and Roman world was now gained; and the cross inscribed upon the labarum of Constantine was the symbol of its victory; the cross, which meant only ignominy and torture, penetrated all literature and all history, and entered into every loving and believing heart, as the symbol of divine suffering and victorious love. And the greatness and completeness of the victory is seen in the simple fact, that for more than a thousand years the whole literature of the church was chiefly occupied with the shaping

and systematizing of doctrines, and had but little to do with the avowed foes of Christian thought and the Christian faith. Augustine wrote his *De Civitate Dei* on the highest ground which human thought (outside the inspired prophecies) had yet reached as to the problem of human history; and Aquinas summed up the controversy in his work *De Vera Catholica Fide adversus Gentiles*, which alone would have made his name immortal, had he not himself eclipsed it by his *Summa*—undoubtedly one of the master works of theological authorship. On the eve of the Reformation, Boccaccio, indeed, had satirized the faith, and Macchiavelli wrote upon the anti-national tendencies of the Christian system. Here and there was one who uttered some dissent on minor points; but the whole tone of thought and belief was on the side of the church. And herein was a part of the secret of the power of Rome—the mystical Babylon. The papacy became despotic, corrupt, and anti-Christian; the reform, prepared for during more than a century, broke out simultaneously in all parts of Europe; and with the reform came a spirit of free action in all departments of life, and free inquiry in respect to the truths of the faith. The highest aim and success (so far as it went) of the mediæval church and theology, was to combine (in the realistic theory) the traditional dogmas of the church with the Greek, especially the Aristotelian philosophy: for Scholasticism is the marriage of the Aristotelian philosophy with the Christian dogma (as determined by consent and councils). The Reformation consisted, intellectually and spiritually, in

the denial of the premises, viz., in the position, that the dogmas of councils are not divine and immutable, and that the metaphysics (not so much the logic) of Aristotle does not contain all ultimate truth in its best form.

The essence of the skeptical spirit, which, after the Reformation had been adjusted in its political and religious relations, manifested itself in the different countries of Europe, may perhaps be said, in the most general and abstract formula of statement, to consist in exalting the subjective, the individual reason and will, against the objective, as found in the faith and the Scriptures of the church. The earth was made the centre, and the sun supposed to revolve around it—reversing the law of astronomy. The mediæval church feigned that itself was *theocentric*; the extreme reaction of the Reformation was *anthropocentric*—man's need and destiny being the one thing needful. The shape that this tendency has taken in the latest times is virtually *geocentric*—making this world and its supposed laws to determine destiny. The philosophic method of the latter tendency is called *inductive*—a powerful and sufficient method in its own sphere, but now assuming to govern the premises, as well as the mode, of inference. Every *method* presupposes certain facts, and can only dictate the inferences. It cannot limit either the facts of nature, or the phenomena of consciousness.

Bacon and Descartes, though both of them believed in the Christian faith, are put at the head of the two great and opposite tendencies in which infidelity

has shown itself since the Reformation, viz., the materialistic and the rationalistic or transcendental, in the bad sense of these words. But neither Bacon nor Descartes contemplated such results from their systems. Especially is it only by taking the lesser half of the Baconian system, that infidelity gains any countenance from him. He himself says, "that it is most certain, and approved by experience, that while light gusts may move men to Atheism, yet fuller draughts bring men back to religion," and in a striking passage in the *New Organon*, he says: "Only let mankind regain their rights over nature, assigned to them by the gift of God; and that power obtained, its exercise will be governed by right, reason, and true religion." It was only when his system was transferred to another soil, and brought under the formulas of infidelity, that it came to nourish skepticism.

The course of modern infidelity has been curiously determined by the comparative freedom of the different nations, and it has come to its height—it is well worthy of being carefully noted—not in those countries where political thought and speech are freest, but where they have been most restricted. Deism, Atheism, Pantheism are the three main forms represented respectively by England, France, and Germany. The movement began in England with Herbart, Hobbes, Collins, Tindal, Chubb, and Morgan, in the 16th and 17th centuries (including Toland, who, however, held to a kind of material pantheism). And as far as the main and fundamental position of these free-thinkers is concerned, meeting them on

their own grounds, fairly and fully, English Christianity showed itself fully equal to the task, as is seen in the works of Baxter, Cudworth, S. Clarke, Waterland, Leland, and especially the immortal *Analogy* of Bishop Butler.\*

This same movement, transferred to Germany, at first attained the form known by the name of rationalism, criticising the historic records of the faith, and setting up natural reason and ethics as the ultimate test and source of truth. Philosophic rationalism received its most consistent form through the criticism of Kant; though he himself, with all his speculative insight, confessed the radical evil of human nature and a firm faith in the Being of God.

In France the infidel movement was neither critical nor rationalistic—it became materialistic and revolutionary. The French monarchy had become a despotism; the banishment and slaughter of the Huguenots had decimated the moral power of the nation; a corrupt and persecuting Romanism was all the faith recognized. Rousseau pleaded for the rights and sympathies of nature; Voltaire, though retaining faith in a God, ridiculed the Scriptures on the basis of a *philosophic portative*. D'Holbach, Diderot, D'Alembert, preached atheism in the *Encyclopédie*—(Diderot declaring that the height of

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\* The great religious movement in England, under Whitfield and Wesley, in the last part of the century, completely broke the popularity of this deistic movement. Dr. Gillett's *God in Human Thought*, 2 vols., N. Y., Scribner Armstrong & Co., 1874, gives a comprehensive and able account of the whole English controversy, and of the services of Bishop Butler.



religion was to have none at all) : and the result was reached in the chaos, conflicts, and woes of the French Revolution, from which that fated land only recovered by accepting an imperial despotism and restoring the Catholic clergy with new pomp ; so that now ultramontane principles have the ascendancy in the successors of Bossuet and the old Catholic bishops, who contended so manfully for the Gallican liberties.

But it was reserved for Germany, in some of its more recent forms of philosophy and theology, to combine together all the phases and all the resources of infidelity, in the most learned, acute, and comprehensive assaults ever made upon the Christian faith—so that any other current infidelity in any other part of the world is but a feeble echo, so far as learning and speculation go, of what is found in these Teutonic schemes—while, at the same time, it is true, that the same land has furnished the most elaborate and thorough replies to the criticisms and hypotheses of those assailants of our faith. There is a striking resemblance in many points between the character of the attack on Christianity in this last form of it, and that which it assumed under the influence of the New-Platonic philosophy in ancient times—the same comprehensiveness of method and combination of weapons, and the same attempt to form a complete system for man by an eclectic process ; but yet the Germans show more thoroughness and destructiveness in both the historical and philosophical methods of conducting the argument, for infidelity must grow in skill to compete with a Christianity which has been growing in power for 1800 years. ✓

Ever since the time of Leibnitz, the German philosophic movement has tended toward the construction of a universal system. The influence of Spinoza, with his pantheistic theory of one substance, and his demonstrative method applied to metaphysics, also had a very great influence, especially in the later German schools. Kant initiated a powerful tendency by his Criticism of the Pure Reason (directed in part against Hume's skepticism), and by his Criticism of the Practical Reason (conscience), on which he grounded his severely ethical and strongly theistic creed. He is the real philosophical father of strict ethical rationalism—that is, of the system which puts the prescripts of reason above the written word. At the same time, there was a host of scholars who were applying historical and philological criticism to the interpretation of Scripture in a way to undermine its infallible authority. Fichte followed Kant, retaining, however, chiefly his idealism in a subjective sense; he endeavored, in his earlier writings, to deduce the universe from the *Ego*, and substituted the moral order of the universe for God. Schelling, in his youthful enthusiasm, when magnetism was disclosing its wonders, announced, as a prophet, the theory of the identity of opposites, of the ideal and the real, with pure intellectual vision desecrating one common essence with the two poles, viz.: the spiritual and the material; in his later system, the Philosophy of Mythology, he plants himself upon more distinctive theistic and Christian ground. Hegel, with his more thorough and logical method, identified thought and being, and made the vast at-

tempt of a logical development of the universe from pure being by an inherent law, the law of negation, confounding the movement of real being with the processes of logic. He makes spirit to be ultimate. By the law of negation, spirit is transformed into nature, and then comes back to itself in humanity; God becomes conscious in man. This is Hegel's theory, as expounded by the so-called left wing, of which Strauss is the most signal representative. Hegel himself, and many of his followers of the right wing, claim that his system is to be understood only as a philosophy of the Christian faith; that Hegelianism gives us, in the form of philosophy, the same fundamental truths which Christianity gives in the form of creeds. The later German tendencies are a reaction against such an abstract idealism, and, as developed by Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann, they avow pessimism as their creed, and make annihilation to be the chief boon for the race. Not to speak more particularly of the contemporaneous movements in France and England, we can now only refer to the alliance, in these three countries, of Pantheism and Materialism, in their most developed forms, and in a common attack upon the Christian creed and church.

This rapid historic sketch may suffice to show, that in all the periods of this great conflict, there has been a difference in the character, both of the assault and the defense. At first it was Christianity against Polytheism, Judaism, and the wisdom of the ancient schools. And here Christianity was vindicated as a positive revelation; and, as a result of the conflict, the old Catholic church ruled in the East and the

West. In the mediæval period, there was not only the subjugation of Northern Europe, but also the consolidation of the Christian system in the scholastic theology and the realistic philosophy. The Christian theory governed the world of thought and kept it in bonds. In the next stadium we have the separation of these elements, and the conflict of Christianity with all the forms of human research and speculation. It has come into conflict with deism, with rationalism in its various modes, with atheism and with pantheism; and now it is contending with atheism and pantheism allied. And as the form of the conflict has changed, so has the mode of the defense. The *Analogy* of Bishop Butler, admirable as it is for its specific ends, does not meet the questions raised by Hegel and Baur, by Darwin and Spencer.

## APPENDIX II.

### RECENT GERMAN WORKS ON APOLOGETICS.

*An article by Prof. Smith in the "Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review," October, 1876.*

IT is only within a generation that Apologetics has become recognized as a distinct department of theology, and treated as an organized whole. And it is chiefly in Germany that its distinctive nature and definition, its method and relation to other branches, have been fully discussed. Planck, in his *Introduction to the Theological Sciences*,\* first assigned to it a definite place in the sphere of theology, putting it, however, strangely enough, under the head of exegetical theology.

Schleiermacher, in his epoch-making treatise, entitled *A Short Exhibit of Theological Study*, published in the first volume of his Complete Works,† first assigned to Apologetics the leading place in the organism of the different departments of theology—as a preparatory discipline for all the rest, and having

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\* Planck, *Einleitung in die theologischen Wissenschaften*, Vol. I. §§ 271–362.

† Schleiermacher, *Kurze Darstellung des theologischen Studiums: Sämmtl. Werke, Abthlg. I., Bd. I., § 39.*

to do with the fundamental principles of theology. In this sense it is equivalent to fundamental theology, and has for its object the investigation of all the ideas, facts, and truths which logically or historically precede the system of theology proper, or Christian dogmatics, strictly so called. This is a broad and comprehensive view of the subject; but, as thus defined, it neglects too much what has always been considered as the chief object of Apologetics, that is, the specific defense of religion, especially of the Christian religion, against objections—the vindication of the absolute and final authority of Christianity as the highest and best system of truth for man. Accordingly, few have followed Schleiermacher in giving so wide a scope to Apologetics; though almost all recent writers find a specific position for it in the encyclopædia of theology. Tholuck (in his *Vermischte Schriften*, Bd. I., p. 149, sq.) and some others denied that it could be treated fully, as a whole, by itself; for the general reason, that all the doctrines, facts, and truths of both natural and revealed religion, have, and must have, their apologetic side; they can all be assailed, and must all be defended; but this, they say, should be done in detail, rather than by grouping all together. In any case, the materials with which Apologetics has to do must be taken from some or all of the other departments of theology. And if its office be to reply in detail to all the specific objections, and to establish the truth of the assailed positions, of course it is an endless work, and would defy all attempts at a proper classification. But it is not to be, nor has it been, so un-

derstood. Very generally stated, it may be said that Apologetics comprises what has previously been published under the two great heads of natural theology, on the one hand, and of the evidences of Christianity on the other. And the chief problem and question has been to bring these two under one department, or under one definition; also including the general principles and questions that come up in the modern philosophies of history and religion, as well as the substance of the investigations contained in the introductions to the Old and New Testament. The facts of ethnology, and of primæval and prehistoric history—even the investigations of natural science, and the principles of anthropology, and of ethics, have also come to constitute a part of the materials of which Apologetics must make use. So that we have here manifestly a pretty broad field; and the question is, whether it can be fairly and profitably cultivated with a scientific unity of idea and design.

Another, though a somewhat secondary question, is, to which division of the general encyclopædia of theology shall Apologetics be allotted? Nobody would now think of following Planck in putting it under exegetical theology. Only a part of its materials can be claimed as giving it a position under historical theology; but it comprises much more than this, especially when we bring into view the modern and urgent conflicts of Christianity with materialism and pantheism. It must then come under either systematic or practical theology, or have a place by itself.

Dr. Delitzsch,\* in his *System of Apologetics*, assigned it to practical theology, since it has to do with the practical work and progress of the church (as has preaching). It cannot well be put under any one department. But Dr. Delitzsch's own treatment of the subject is quite like that of a work on systematic theology; it is made up almost wholly of dogmatic material.

Dr. Düsterdieck,† in his able articles on this question, also contends for practical theology as the proper rubric under which Apologetics is to be put, on the ground that Apologetics, etymologically, is the theory of apology, just as homiletics is the theory of sermonizing, and so comes under the head of practice and art, rather than of system or theory. But this seems to be too narrow a view of its nature and functions. It does not merely tell us how all vindication is to be conducted; how Christianity is to be scientifically defended; but it also defends it; and not only defends it, but tries to establish its truth and authority. As Baumstark (*Apologetik*, p. 29) well remarks: "Apologetics, as the scientific proof of the absolutism of the Christian religion, as a whole, cannot be assigned to a single division of the system of theology, but is to prepare the ground for the whole of theology. Hence it has its place in the introduction to the whole system, as proposed by Schleiermacher." It is treated of by Pelt in his *En-*

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\* *System der christlichen Apologetik*, 1869.

† In *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie*, 1866, on the Idea and Encyclopædic Position of Apologetics.



cyclopædia under the general caption of the "Doctrine of Theological Principles; or, Fundamental Theology." The objection to this is, that its materials are so largely taken from church history, exegesis, etc., that it must needs come after these. It would seem, then, that we must either make a distinct head for it, introductory to all the departments of theology, or else assign it a place (as Hagenbach does) introductory to systematic theology. The latter is, perhaps, the most convenient arrangement for teaching, even though it be not free from all logical objections.

To return to the general idea of Apologetics. It was defined by Sack\* (in the first really important and systematic work on the subject after Schleiermacher's scheme was propounded) as that branch of theology ("theological *discipline*") "which treats of the ground of the Christian religion as divine fact." He distinguishes between the *ideal* and *real* sides of Christianity; and assigns the former (the ideal) to systematic theology, while the latter (the real) is the proper subject of Apologetics—having to do with the *actuality* of Christianity; so preparing the way for dogmatics. This seems (as Baumstark says, p. 2) to separate the ideal and the real too much; and Apologetics, as a matter of fact, has to do with a good deal more than the external history of Christianity. And Sack himself concedes, that "the ideal side, or the doctrine, can never be considered without relation to the real, historical basis; and that, in Apologetics, though the main subject-matter be the real

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\* K. H. Sack, *Christliche Apologetik*. Hamburg, 1829. 2d ed., 1841.

side of Christianity, yet this can never be treated without reference to the ideal element." His further treatment of the materials of Apologetics is, in fact, rather doctrinal than historical; for his chief headings are "Redemption," "Life," and "Perfection;" and these subjects are taken from Christian theory and life, rather than from Christian history.

The Roman Catholic divine, Drey,\* in his work, entitled *Apologetics as the Scientific Evidence of the Divinity of Christianity in its Manifestation*, defines Apologetics as "the Philosophy of the Christian Revelation, and of its History." He is the representative of a class of German Catholic divines who felt the influence of the philosophy of Schelling, in its later form, in its opposition to the Hegelian logic; and who were led to lay the chief stress on the positive historical elements of the Christian system. Christianity, they said, is primarily historical fact; and theology should also be historical and positive in its fundamental character. Yet it cannot be merely historical; it is rather a philosophy of the history--a scientific shaping and defense of the Christian church and religion. To this definition and treatment of the subject it has been well objected, that it brings the whole of Apologetics under the head of the philosophy of religion; it ceases to be a part of theology, and becomes a branch of philosophy. As a philosophy of religion, Drey's work contains valuable materials, shaped with learning and

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\* Apologetik als wissenschaftliche Nachweisung der Göttlichkeit des Christenthums in seiner Erscheinung. Mainz, 3 Bde., 1844-47.

ability. It handles a part of the theme, but does not give a clear and full view of the whole of the science. Apologetics includes, to a certain extent, the philosophy of religion ; but it has also a wider as well as a more specific scope.

Of the *Christian Apologetics on an Anthropological Basis*, by Pastor Christian Edward Baumstark,\* only the first volume has been published. It differs from the other works on this subject chiefly in its method, as indicated by the title. The author takes the ground (on the *Method of Apologetics*, pp. 30-36), that while the historical method has been chiefly followed, the psychological is the only satisfactory and final one. The historical method tries to show that the Christian religion is, and by its history is proved to be, the true religion for man. The psychological method, on the other hand, starts with the individual, and shows that Christianity completely corresponds to the religious capacity and the religious needs of man. It is a merit of Baumstark's work that it emphasizes the latter point, and vindicates its necessity. But the fact is, that every apologetic work must, in some way, more or less consciously combine both methods. Even in the oldest apologetic literature, as Baumstark concedes, we have examples of both—the *Præparatio Evangelica* and *Demonstratio Evangelica* of Eusebius, and the *De Civitate Dei* of Augustine, standing more on the historical ground ; while the psychological method predominates in

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\* Christliche Apologetik auf anthropologischer Grundlage. Bd. I. Frankfurt a. M., 1872.

Tertullian's treatise, *De Testimonio Animæ naturaliter Christianæ*, and in the *Clementine Homilies*.

On this psychological basis, the general scheme of Apologetics, as propounded by Baumstark, is the following: First of all, in opposition to materialism and pantheism, he proposes, by "anthropological investigations," to evince and exhibit man's native religious capacities and endowments; then to show how far this natural religious basis reaches, and where this development has its limits, which require to be supplemented by a special revelation. Thus the foundation is secured which bears up all the rest. In the second part he reviews the history of the non-Christian religions—those "outside of" Christianity—to see whether, and how far, this native religious bias is manifested in them, and whether they can, and do, satisfy man's religious cravings. The third part is to give the proof, that man finds in Christianity alone the full satisfaction for his religious needs. The first two parts are well and fairly treated in the first volume of this work; the third part is not yet published. The utmost that seems to be possible, or accomplished, by this "anthropological method," is to prove that man is a religious being; that religion is a necessity of human nature; and that in the Christian religion man's religious longing and needs find their highest development and satisfaction.

The most important and, on the whole, the ablest of these recent German works is the treatise of Dr. J. H. A. Ebrard,\* *Apologetics; The Scientific Vindication*

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\* Apologetik. Wissenschaftliche Rechtfertigung des Christenthums, von J. H. A. Ebrard, Dr. phil. et theol. 2 Theile, Gütersloh, 1874-5.

of *Christianity*, 2 Parts, 1874-5. The author is best known outside of Germany by his *Scientific Criticism of the Evangelical History* (3d edition, 1868, 1241 pages), at first written in reply to Strauss's life of Jesus, but afterward extended in scope so as to exhibit the unity and harmony of the four Gospels in a thorough and satisfactory manner. Bleek assigns it a very high place among the works on that subject. Ebrard's *Dogmatics*, too, in two volumes, gives a comprehensive outline of systematic theology, chiefly from the Reformed point of view, though his Calvinism is of a moderate caste. It is one of the more useful works for students of theology, and has been used as a text-book in some of the Reformed institutions. His *Apologetics* has still higher claims to attention, as showing the results of wide and protracted studies, and making an excellent attempt to collect the somewhat heterogeneous materials of this new *disciplina* into a systematic form. He says in the preface to the first part :

“For several years I have had a growing conviction that the coming ministers of the gospel must enter more thoroughly into the investigations, questions, and principles of the natural sciences, if they would be in a condition to contend victoriously against the anti-Christian tendencies of the times.” “These considerations determined me, in the winter of 1872-3, to deliver a course of academic lectures, to which I gave the only partially adequate name of *Apologetics*, in order to fit it into the *Schema* of the traditional departments of theology. My hearers were theological students. I could, likewise, have wished

that there might have been an equal number of students of medicine ; for I well know the severe internal struggles through which a young man, educated as a Christian, must pass when he enters upon the study of medicine or the natural sciences." He adds, that though he has always to some extent pursued the study of the natural sciences, yet for the purpose of these lectures he engaged in renewed investigations, and he claims that in the present work he stands upon the basis of the assured results of present scientific investigations—distinguishing between what is certain and what is merely hypothetical ; and examining with special critical care the consequences drawn from these hypotheses in respect to super-sensuous or supernatural subjects. He further claims, that this criticism of the hypotheses of naturalists is not made from the standpoint of an abstract, *a priori*, metaphysics. "Whoever will take the pains," he says, "to read my book, will at once discern that my philosophical method is realistic throughout ; I start from *observed facts*, and go forward step by step with painstaking care ; I endeavor to lay at the basis of my investigation the *complete series of the facts*."

In the introduction to this work, Dr. Ebrard proceeds to an examination of the main preliminary questions as to the nature, scope, and place of Apologetics as a scientific vindication of Christianity. To bring these questions fairly before our readers, we cannot do better than to give a translation, with slight abridgments, of the whole of this introduction.

## INTRODUCTION TO EBRARD'S APOLOGETICS.

§ 1. *Apologetics or Apology*.—In giving this work the title of *Apologetics*, according to the modern usage, and not *Apology*, as the fathers of the church called it, I am not without justification. And yet, before we ask, What is Apologetics? we must examine and decide the previous question, Whether there is such a science as Apologetics? According to the verbal interpretation, Apologetics is the science of the ἀπολογεῖσθαι, that is, the science or *disciplina*, which examines the nature of defense (or vindication), that is, the essential characteristics of the apologetic procedure, and thence deduces the correct method. According to this, Apologetics is related to Apology as is theory to practice; that is, it is a relation analogous to that of homiletics to preaching, of liturgics to worship, of catechetics to catechising, etc. But here we encounter a fact which makes us hesitate, and demands a more thorough analysis. For while in the above-named theoretical departments of theology we always sharply distinguish between theory and practice, doctrine and application, so that homiletics never goes over into homilies, nor liturgics into liturgies, we never, on the other hand, see, nor can we conceive of, an Apologetics which does not go right over into and become an Apology. In the military art the theory of the defense (*e. g.*, of a country or a fortress) is clearly distinguished from the act of defending; in the sphere of Christian theology, Apologetics is never limited to the theory; it does not merely tell us what the defense should be, but it is the scientific vindication itself.

§ 2. *Apologetics a Science*.—It is not difficult to see the reason of this. The above noted separation of theory and practice has no place whatever excepting in the sphere of ecclesiastical *action*, where theology becomes a practical art. The rules of such ecclesiastical action are derived from theological science, but they cannot, without practice, be so appropriated as to become a capacity or an art. It is wholly otherwise in the defense of the truth of Christianity. It may, indeed, find a place within different branches of church activity—for example, we may have Apologetics in sermons and pastoral care, in catechising, in the work of foreign and domestic missions, but Apologetics as such does not come under any of these ecclesiastical acts, it forms no part of church action, but it is essentially a *scientific* work.

It is only a scientific vindication of the truth of Christianity which deserves to be called a defense (an Apology), for the last end or aim of the so-called *Apologetics* is not to impart a capacity for action, but knowledge, viz., a recognition (knowledge) of the truth of Christianity. The name Apologetics does not seem to be exactly fitted, or it is only half fitted, to denote this. What the word exactly denotes, that is, the *science of defense* in general, would be only a very empty and formal *discipline*. For as to defense in the abstract, nothing more can be said than what might be embraced in a very few formal and general conceptions. Every defense is determined by the character of the object to be defended; a fortress is to be defended otherwise than a chessman, a mathematical theorem otherwise than a philo-



logical thesis, and both of these in a different way from an ethical postulate. Christian Apologetics, now, has for its object the defense of Christianity; for, according to usage, by Christian Apologetics we do not understand instructions as to how any given object may be defended in a Christian way, but instruction in the way in which Christianity is to be defended. "Christian" here designates the object and not the quality; "Christian Apologetics" is equivalent to "Apologetics of Christianity," that is, it is the *Science of the Apology of Christianity*.

§ 3. *Nature of Apologetics*.—And thus we are led to conclude that there is, at least, a relative justification for retaining the designation "Christian Apologetics." Between it and a mere "Apology" there still remains a difference, though a flowing one. For, Apologetics considered as the *science* of the defense of Christianity is to be distinguished from a mere Apology as such, in both its principles and method. There are apologies, oral or written, which are designed to reply to some definite objections made against Christianity, each of which may require something special in the method; thus Justin Martyr directed both of his Apologies against a series of definite single attacks. Such a defense may be *admirable as an Apology*, and on this very account, one-sided and *inadequate as Apologetics*. Christian Apologetics must then be distinguished from mere Apology by the fact, that its procedure and method are not determined by casual attacks made at some particular time, but by its deriving its *method of*

*defense*, and consequently the defense itself, from the *essential nature of Christianity*. Every Apologetics is Apology, but every Apology is not Apologetics. Apologetics, in fine, is that science which infers from the *inmost nature* of Christianity what classes of attacks are in general *possible*, what different *sides* of Christian truth are liable to be attacked, and what *false principles* are at the basis of these attacks. *Apologetics is the Science of the Defense of the Truth of Christianity.*

NOTE.—Hännell (*Studien und Kritiken*, 1843, 3) defines Apologetics as "the science of the common ground of the church and of theology," but this is no definition, for this ground is Christ, and Apologetics would then be the science of Christ. The definition of the Roman Catholic theologian, Drey (in the work above cited), represents Apologetics in a way which is *formally* false, as the "Philosophy of the Christian Revelation and of its History." Philosophizing about some *given* object (as about revelation in general), and even about an object of faith, is, indeed, possible (this is indirectly denied by Baumstark—see below), and it can also take on an apologetic character, and every true Apologetics must also proceed philosophically, not empirically, so that for substance Drey's definition is not so far from the mark; but in form (formally) it is incorrect, because instead of developing the idea of Apologetics, it only names one of the means of which Apologetics has to make use. Lechler's definition is better, viz.: "The scientific proof that the Christian religion is the absolute religion." (*Ueber den Begriff der Apologetik*, Studien und Kritiken, 1839, 3.) Only this says too little, for Apologetics is not merely the evidence, but the *science* of the evidence of the truth of Christianity. Then, too, the idea of the "absolute religion" introduces something foreign to the object, just as in the title to Drey's work the phrase "*divinity* of Christianity" is too specific. For the question is simply this: Is what Christianity says of itself true or false? If this is decided, everything else about its absoluteness or divinity follows of course. Chr. Ed. Baumstark ("Christl. Apologetik auf anthropologischer Grundlage," Frankf. a. M., 1872) contests the position that "Apologetics is the

science of Apology," and defines it as "the scientific defense of Christianity as the absolute religion." Apologetics, as we have seen, comes to this, and I have, therefore, put the two as equivalent in the title of my book, but this is not a *definition*. Baumstark himself afterward recognizes the fact, that Apologetics, in distinction from an Apology, has to defend Christianity not merely on one or another side, but on all conceivable sides. This can be done only when Apologetics deduces from the very *essence* of Christianity the *possible* attacks upon it, and thus becomes the science of the defense of the truth of Christianity.

§ 4. *The Twofold Office of Apologetics.*—Christianity, according to its own original and documentary declaration in the Holy Scriptures, is the redemption of man by the eternal, living, and personal God, achieved in time and ever advancing to completion; it is man's redemption *out of* an abnormal state and relation to God, opposed to the will of God, and the true nature and destiny of man himself, and *into* a normal condition and relation to God, corresponding with the divine will and man's nature and destination. Thus Christianity, according to its own testimony, is (a) not a relative truth, or stage in the knowledge of the truth, having only a relative worth, but it is *eternal and absolute truth*, yet it is this truth, (b) not in the form of mere teaching or doctrine, but in the form of *fact, of actual realization*. Christianity is an historical act of redemption in time; it is *historical fact*, but it is act and fact, having *eternal and absolute contents*. In the person of Christ "the truth" (*ἡ ἀλήθεια*) appeared personally; in history "the life" (*ἡ ζωὴ*); in Christ's passion and resurrection, the eternal normal relation between man and God is reinstated in and by a

temporal act; and so, too, the conversion of the individual to Christ, and faith in Christ, are the filling of the soul in time with an eternal substance. If Christianity now be such an intimate union of temporal historical acts with the eternal substance of truth, it follows directly—*that the attacks upon Christianity must be aimed either against its eternal substance of truth, or against the temporal facts.* That is, either the *eternal truths in Christianity* can be assailed, or its *historical character*.

NOTE.—The definition of Apologetics given by Sack (*Christl. Apologetik*) is one-sided, viz. : “That branch (*disciplina*) of theology which shows that the ground of the Christian religion is a divine *fact*.” In accordance with this he goes on to say that the office of Systematic Theology is to develop “the ideal side,” or the eternal truth of Christianity, while Apologetics treats of Christianity as actual fact. Sack was probably led to this one-sided definition by the fact, that when he wrote this work, the attacks (of De Wette, and then of Strauss) were almost exclusively made against the historical character of Christianity. Had he written in reply to the modern assaults of materialism upon the existence of life, of soul, of personality, of design (teleology), and of God himself, his definition could hardly have been so partial. But yet he might have remembered the French Encyclopædists! But his chief error consisted in his starting out from the attacks for the moment in vogue, instead of deducing the idea of Apologetics from the essential nature of Christianity.

§ 5. A. *Defense of the Eternal Truth of Christianity. Difference between Apologetics and Polemics.*—The eternal contents of Christianity are attacked when the truths which it teaches or takes for granted are *denied, and represented as falsehoods.* The attacks which Apologetics has here to repel are directed *against these truths as such,* and thus Apologetics is

distinguished from Polemics. The office of Polemics is that of contending against tendencies which do not deny the truths as such, but only call in question the connection of these eternal truths with the facts of Christianity, or present them in a perverted form.

NOTE.—The *Rationalismus Vulgaris*, as well as Socinianism and Pelagianism (like Ebionitism before them), do not deny the historical character of Christianity, do not declare it to be a myth; nor do they deny such eternal truths as that there is a God, that there is a law of God, a moral law for man, and that the transgression of this law is sin. Nor do they deny that Christ came to deliver men from sin—that is, to redeem mankind.

But they call in question that mode of conjoining the historical facts with the eternal truths which are taught by revelation in the primitive documents of Christianity. Thus they deny that the eternal substance of truth was in Jesus Christ personally made manifest; that he freed men from guilt by his expiatory sacrifice, and that deliverance from guilt must precede deliverance from sin, etc. They reduce salvation to mere teaching or example, to a sharpening of the law. This is a *perversion* of Christianity, ἀίρεσις, not a direct denial.

Analogous to these Ebionitistic tendencies, only in the opposite direction, are the Docetic heresies; analogous to the legal heresies are the Antinomian—they are *perversions*. The office of Polemics, as well as of Dogmatics, is to contend against and to refute these perversions of Christianity.

On the other hand, Apologetics has to establish the truth of Christianity against such assaults as have grown up in those systems of speculation which are outside of Christianity, or are opposed to it, and which attack and deny the eternal truths of Christianity as such. When, for example, materialism maintains that the soul and thought are mere functions of the ganglia of the brain; when materialism and pantheism maintain that there is no immortal-

ity, neither eternal happiness nor eternal misery, and that consequently the whole *presupposition* of the necessity of redemption is from the outset deception or superstition ; or when these systems maintain that the freedom of the will is a mere seeming, and that every man at every moment acts from necessity as compelled by his nerves and the ganglia of the brain, etc., that the difference of good and evil is determined only by custom and convenience, that there is no ethical law binding in itself, and hence no sin ; or that there are in nature and in the order of the world no works of design, and consequently that there is no Creator :—all of these cases are denials of Christian truth as such ; here the ground is taken away from under the feet of Christianity, and it is about these questions that Apologetics is to be employed. It has for its office to investigate such attacks in a philosophical manner, and to inquire how they are to be scientifically refuted.

§ 6. *Illustrations and Limitations.*—It is a matter of course that Apologetics cannot bring to these investigations any axioms borrowed from revelation and theology, but can only appeal to the facts of self-consciousness and of native rational knowledge *belonging to man as man*. We do not prove *idem per idem* ; this were illogical and objectionable. To take for granted a knowledge of Christian truth, to *presuppose* a consciousness shaped by Christianity, and then to analyze that consciousness, this is not Apologetics. Considered on its practical side, the object of Apologetics is to give instructions to the practical

theologian, to the minister of the church, and in general to every Christian and member of the church, how he is to defend the truths of Christianity against those who still stand aloof from the faith, against non-Christians and gainsayers. Not as though an unbeliever or scoffer can be converted to Christianity by means of deduction and proof (somewhat as Pastor Blendinger, in Franconia, tries to compel the Jews to see the truth of Christianity by demonstrations inserted in the *Nürnberg Korrespondent*). Repentance alone leads to true Christian faith, such repentance as comes home to the anguished conscience from an inward conviction of the holiness of God's law, and as leads one to ask, what must I do to be saved? But besides scoffers and unbelievers, there are also those who are weak in the faith and wavering, and who are in danger of being led wholly astray by such audacious foes; and for their sakes it is necessary to oppose the fallacious arguments of unbelief, and to do this on such grounds and with such evidence, that these opponents can have nothing to say in reply. Consequently it is necessary to come down to *their* ground, to their arena, to ignore all axioms borrowed from Christianity itself, so as to lead the objectors *e concessis ad absurdum*; to make it evident that their own assumptions and inferences are false and perverse even on the ground of their *own premises*. For this reason the Apologetics of Christianity in its first division, where it defends the eternal truths of Christianity, has to begin wholly with the general facts of human consciousness and the assured results of the study of nature. It has to ask whether those truths

and doctrines which are *presupposed* by Christianity agree or are in conflict with the facts of nature and of natural consciousness, viz. : Such truths as the existence of a living holy God, the reality of a moral law, and the freedom and responsibility of the will ; the fact that man is in a state of opposition to the law, and his incapacity to save himself. The subject then of the first part of Apologetics may be thus stated: *The eternal truth of the substance of Christianity, as measured by the facts of nature and of human consciousness.*

§ 7. B. *Defense of the Historical Character of Christianity.*—The other side of Christianity is its *historical character*. The redemption through Jesus Christ is a fact which occurred nearly two thousand years ago in the land of Judea. The assaults of anti-Christianity are also directed against the historical character of Christianity, especially against its *historical documents*—the biblical writings. The foremost attack is against the historical character of the *contents* of these writings, of which (as Strauss says, in his “Life of Jesus for the German People,” 1864, Preface, p. xiv) we must get quit ; next, against the *credibility* of these writings ; and then—as the means of contesting their credibility—against their *genuineness* and their *antiquity*. The investigation of these points, under the unfitting name of “Introduction,” or under the more fitting title of “Criticism of the Writings of the Old and New Testaments,” forms a special part of theology—a very extended and comprehensive branch, which, taken strictly, is throughout of an apologetic character. But yet, in all its de-



tails, it does not properly come under Apologetics. Not merely for the reason of convenience, since its very comprehensiveness would carry it far beyond the proper limits of this science, but for another—an internal reason, viz.: that such a “criticism” properly makes an “apology” (see § 3), and is not Apologetics, because it necessarily has to follow up and examine the objections, views, and hypotheses made at special times.

§ 8. *Historical Character—continued.*—Apologetics also examines the historical character of Christianity, and the attacks upon it, but in another way, under broader and more general points of view. It must inquire into the possible points of attack, and develop the mode of defense in accordance with certain general principles. The historical fact of redemption presupposes the reality of another historical fact, viz.: of a rebellion, in time, of the will of the creature against the eternal moral law and will of God. Christianity—biblical, revealed Christianity—stands and falls with this preamble. The exact opposite of biblical Christianity, on this point, is found in pantheism and materialism. Pantheism looks upon moral evil, not as the opposition of the creature's will to God; not as a fall and corruption—in a word, not as sin; but, like its father, the devil (Gen. iii: 5), as a lower good—a process of development not yet completed, and even as a necessary means of transition to the good itself; and consequently holds that no Saviour is needed, excepting humanity redeeming itself; and the same is true of materialism, which

teaches that humanity is developed out of an apish state. According to pantheism, we find, in the history of mankind, only a constant progress from mere undeveloped to developed, and hence better, conditions. Whether this be really so is to be determined by investigating the *History of the Race*. As, in the first division of Apologetics, we appeal to the facts of nature and of consciousness, so, in the second part, our subject-matter is the *General History of Culture and Religion*, as well in civilized nations as in savage tribes, in order to find an answer to the question, whether it is a fact, that in the history of the human race there is a constant progress from the lower to the higher, or whether it is not historically established, that there is an incessant counter-tendency, viz. : a constant lapse and degeneracy from a higher to a lower state.

§ 9. *Historical Apologetics—continued.*—When we come to the study of Christianity as a historical fact, *in its organic connection with the general history of religion*, we encounter two remarkable phenomena. On the one hand, there is the historical proof of a fall of the human will from the divine; of a perversion of development into degeneration, as is seen in the documentary evidence of a lapse from primitive monotheism into polytheism, and a tendency to an ever-increasing savagery. But, along with this, we also find the striking fact, that precisely in that Semitic race, in which sin was first raised to a satanic degree of corruption, and the relation of religion to morals was not only glossed over, but perverted into

a gross and fearful immorality, the Godhead being worshiped by lasciviousness and murder—in the midst, now, of this very race, a single branch, notwithstanding all its inclinations to the same corruption, did, nevertheless, manifest the very opposite tendency; so that we find in it a knowledge of the *holiness*, and consequently of the unity and personality, of God, as well as a clear recognition of the curse and misery of sin, and of the necessity of an expiation; and this, too, for hundreds, yea, thousands of years—after every time of disturbance breaking forth anew. The object of our investigation is to ascertain whether this historical phenomenon can be explained in the sense of pantheism, and with the factors of naturalism; or whether we are not obliged, with the Scriptures, to recognize and confess a series of revealed acts of the living God redeeming man from the debasing progress of sin and corruption. And when, in fine, among the same Semitic people, we find the historical ground upon which Jesus Christ appears as the Redeemer of the world, then too—apart from all special researches about the age and origin of the individual gospels—we have the double facts of the Lord's Supper and the Sunday observance, ever testifying to the historical reality of his death and resurrection; and also the testimonies of the Pauline epistles, bringing positive evidence of the supernatural character of his person. And further, Christianity can be tested in history, not merely by the advent of Christ and his entrance into the series of sinful humanity, but also by the effects it has produced upon history itself. It is not difficult

to adduce the proof of the heavenly fruits of Christianity in history. And there is also the weighty fact, that every form of corrupt Christianity which has been drawn into the service of sin, and intertwined with lies, has produced much more abhorrent and pestilential corruption than were ever found in heathendom alone ; and this, too, heightens the evidence for Christianity—just as the mouldering corpse of a man spreads much fouler taints than the carcass of a beast. Here, too, the history of religion, considered in the light of God, becomes, throughout, an apologetic—not of what is now and then called Christianity, but of what Christianity is in the Holy Scriptures. Hence the object of the second part of Apologetics may be given in the phrase—*Christianity as a historical fact, in its organic connection with the general history of religion.*

§ 10. *As to the Form.*—The character of Apologetics, in distinction from Apology, is secured when positive investigations are made the starting point, and the refutation of opposing theorems follows on after. This appears in the First Part of our division of the subject ; here, in the *First Book*, we inquire after the facts of natural consciousness and of objective nature, in a systematic order ; before, in the *Second Book*, we refer to the theories and systems opposed to Christianity, and expose their internal contradictions. In this Second Book of the First Part, too, where Apologetics manifestly becomes Apology (see above, § 1), it is distinguished from a bare Apology (in the sense of § 3) by bringing within

the sphere of its examination, not only such anti-Christian theories as spring up at the present time, but also all classes of theorems, in systematic grouping, which *can be* directed against any, or all, of the fundamental doctrines and presuppositions (*præambula*) of Christianity, in all the forms in which these have appeared *until now*. The future shapes of these theories it cannot, of course, conjecture in detail; and so far forth Apologetics, like every human science, is not complete, but growing in and with the times. The last holds true also of the Second Part of Apologetics in our division. The materials here used for the history of religion have been chiefly collected, in recent times, by the labors of Max Müller, Spiegel, Dunker, and others. Such an investigation as is given in this Second Part was not possible a generation ago. In ethnography, and the religious history of the savage races, our knowledge is still fragmentary. Here the first canon of investigation must be, not to fill up the gaps by airy hypotheses, but to restrict ourselves to deductions from what is surely attested. Thus the error will be avoided which is now so plainly in vogue on the side of the opponents of Christianity.

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This Introduction to Ebrard's Apologetics gives a sufficiently full and fair view of the way in which this department of theology is now generally treated in Germany, and of the questions raised in relation to its extent and method. Understanding Apologetics in his sense and usage of the term, his treatment of the subject, in the body of his work, is full and able,

more satisfactory on the whole than any other single treatise. We can give only a very general sketch. As already stated, the whole material is divided into two parts. The First Part, comprised in the first volume, is entitled *The Eternal Truths of Christianity Measured by the Facts of Nature and of Human Consciousness*. This is divided into two Books, the first of which contains the Positive Development; the second, the Examination and Refutation of the Systems opposed to Christianity.

Under Book First, after some general statements as to the nature of Christianity, and what is presupposed in it, there are three divisions of the subject-matter. (1) *The Ethical Law and its Author*, pp. 17-222; (2) *On Sin*, pp. 223-281; (3) *Redemption and its Necessity*, more concisely treated, pp. 282-314. In the first division, the fundamental questions of ethics, of psychology, and of natural theology are discussed at considerable length. The facts of human consciousness, in respect to the world, to the human soul, and to the moral law are clearly analyzed and made the basis for the refutation of anti-Christian theories and speculations. Man's dependence upon nature is fully granted, while his self-conscious independence is clearly vindicated. The whole of nature is viewed as a complex of laws filled with marks of design. Man's knowledge of God is shown to be natural and necessary. The author of the vast system of designs in nature must be a self-conscious being; there is no real contradiction between an absolute and a personal being. The correct form of proof of the existence of God is not to be found by

asking "whether the Absolute *exists*, but rather by asking, *In what form does the Absolute exist?*" Is it an abstract aboriginal unity, or an unconscious primitive force, or self-conscious Spirit?" (p. 199.) God, it is then shown, is essentially ethical; God is love; the moral law is the highest law.

In the Second Division the existence and nature of sin are considered. In opposition to the skeptical theories, it is shown that it is not physical but moral, not from necessity but by an act of freedom, involving the race, and also implying personal responsibility. Its origin is in the beginning of the race and the divine relation to it is one of permission and not of efficiency. It is all, however, subject to the divine disposal and government; nature itself, in fact, was arranged from the beginning in view of the possibility of sin.

Man, thus shown to be essentially a moral being, the subject of a moral law, and having transgressed that law, stands in need of redemption, which is considered in the Third Division. Man is unable to redeem himself, redemption comes only through the divine work of the God-man, which is grounded in the mystery of the internal relations of the persons in the Godhead. The Gospel is no human invention. The divine act of redemption corresponds to the human need. The incarnation and its miracles are conceivable and not irrational. The Second Book of the First Part is devoted to the examination and refutation of the anti-Christian systems of philosophy (pp. 315-443). The author treats: 1, Of the mechanical system, or the denial of the organic life-

power; 2, Of the denial of final causes, design in nature (which he calls Aposkopiology); he here ably vindicates the teleological theory of the universe; 3, Of the Darwinian theory, which is thoroughly and acutely discussed; 4, Of the denial of the freedom of the will, and on moral statistics, where the positions and assumptions of materialism are candidly and fully exposed; 5, Of the Pantheistic philosophy, examining the systems of Spinoza, J. G. Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Von Hartmann, and Schopenhauer. He has evidently made a thorough study of these anti-Christian theories, and shows their inconsistency not merely with Christian doctrines, but also with the recognized facts of nature and of human consciousness. This work is as thoroughly done as his limits would allow.

The Second Part of Apologetics in Dr. Ebrard's arrangement presents Christianity as a Historical Fact in its Organic Connection with the General History of Religion. It is divided into two Books, respectively entitled the Religions of Men, and the Revelation of God. The first of these occupies some five hundred pages of the second volume, while the Divine Revelation is sketched in sixty-eight pages. Perhaps the best and most thorough portion of the whole work is contained in the author's elaborate investigations under the former head, comprising, as it does, the results of the latest ethnographic and linguistic studies by the most eminent scholars of Germany and other countries. Dr. Ebrard, according to his own account, prepared himself by protracted and extended study for this most important and difficult



task, going through the writings of W. von Humboldt, Buschmann, Schott, Von der Gablentz, and others, collecting the facts from all attainable sources, and combining the whole in a narrative and argument of convincing force. We do not know where to find a more weighty reply to the assumptions and theories of those writers who persist in claiming, according to the unproved hypothesis of a merely naturalistic evolution, that the primitive religious state of mankind was the lowest and most debased form of polytheistic idolatry, and that the higher religions have been developed out of these base rudiments. Dr. Ebrard shows conclusively that the facts all lead to another conclusion, that gross idolatry is a degeneration of mankind from antecedent and purer forms of religious worship. He first treats of the civilized nations of antiquity, the Aryan and Indian religions, the Vedas, the Indra period, Brahmanism and Buddhism; then of the religion of the Eranians, the Avesta, and the Parsees; next of the Greeks and Romans, the Egyptians, the Canaanites, and the heathen Semitic forms of worship, including Phœnicians, Assyrians, and Babylonians. His Second Division is devoted to the half-civilized and savage races, in the North and West of Europe, in Asia and Polynesia (Tartars, Mongols, Malays, Cushites); then of America, including a minute examination of the relations of the different races here to the Mongol, Japanese, and old Chinese immigrations. This part of the work is of special interest, and contains many ingenious suggestions and speculations as to the connection between Asiatic and native American culture.

In summing up the results of these conscientious and prolonged investigations, the author claims that he has shown that there "is not anywhere the least trace of an upward and onward advance from Fetichism to Polytheism, and from Polytheism to a gradually dawning knowledge of one God ; but that, on the other hand, it is definitely proved that among all the nations of the heathen world there has been a fall and degradation out of an earlier and relatively purer knowledge of God ;" that even among the most abject and debased "there are reminiscences of an earlier worship of one invisible creator and ruler of the world." He also holds and maintains, that he has proved "the essential unity of the human race, and the unity of its primitive traditions, that is, the truth of its early history," as given in the Scriptures, and confirmed by the testimony of different races and nations. In their dispersion from the original centre of the race (the western part of Central Asia, in the Euphrates Valley), all the people and tribes "carried with them the memory of one God, who, in the beginning, revealed himself to man ; of one sin of the first parents, in the eating of the forbidden fruit through the influence of the tempter upon the woman, and of the entrance of death as the consequence and punishment of sin ; of the brother's murder, and of three brothers who invented the metallic arts, etc. ; of a race of giants ; of the flood ; of the ark, and the mountain, and the birds sent from the ark ; of the rainbow and the promise ; of three sons from whom descended all the peoples ; of a revolt against God, the building of the tower, the confusion of tongues, and the sundering of the nations."

But we must needs stop in our analysis and extracts from this very able, comprehensive, and timely work. It is a vigorous, learned, and high-toned contribution to our apologetic literature—well worthy of being reproduced in an English version. Before materialism and pantheism can win the day, they have got to disprove the positions and refute the arguments of such works as this. Their earth-born theory is of little avail against such an array of facts—facts of history, facts of nature, and facts of human consciousness.

In the concluding Book, headed “The Revelation of God,” Dr. Ebrard sums up the results of all his investigations, and then treats, first, of the “Redeeming Acts of God,” in his revelation under the old dispensation and in the incarnation; and, second, of the “Effects of Redemption” upon the individual, upon society, and upon races and nations. This is less fully treated than some other parts of his great theme, and leaves much to be supplemented. It might well be the subject of another volume.

The *System of Christian Apologetics* (1869), by Dr. F. Delitzsch, the eminent orientalist, of Leipsic, differs greatly from that of Dr. Ebrard, and is handled in an entirely original method.

## APPENDIX III.

### OUTLINE OF PROFESSOR SMITH'S INTENDED LECTURES ON EVOLUTION.

#### I.

##### INTRODUCTORY AND GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.

EVOLUTION is a great word : it is meant to cover the History of the Universe. It is the result of a great many words and of all the theories of the universe : Cosmogony, Emanation, Development, Progress, progressive organization, the ascent from the lowest to the highest, the whole space from the beginning to the consummation, the last aspiration of Metaphysics, the last results of Physics, the final term of Pantheism, of Materialism (Atheism), of Theism and also of Theology.

The history of the evolution theory is as old as human thought. Its materialistic forms were advanced and rejected in the dawn of philosophy. It is now newly formulated.\*

In the Vedas we find the recognition of forces and organizing powers. Theism (at least, infinite Mind), Pantheism and Materialism are there. The <sup>2</sup> order

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\* By Spencer more ably than any other.

of succession" is drawn out: from the substance of eternal being plants, animals, ether, and earth were separated.

To the Greek mind "atoms were the sacred home and shrine of Philosophy." Democritus assumed them as the origin and explanation of all things; Xenophanes conceived the original substance as ethereal; Anaxagoras demanded that to atoms should be added a shaping intelligence; and the complete reaction against the old materialism (and materialistic necessity), was expressed by Socrates and Plato, in the position that Necessity was not all or ultimate, but that Intelligence was more and higher. This comes out in a striking way in the *Timæus*:\* "Intelligence, superior to Necessity, persuades it (*τῷ πείθειν αὐτήν*) to govern the most of what is evolved so as to lead to what is best, and thus the universe (*τὸ πᾶν*) was fashioned at the beginning because Necessity allowed itself to be persuaded by wisdom." Also:† "two kinds of causes" are discerned, "one necessary, one divine." Socrates, in *Phædon*,‡ tells "how glad he was when he first heard that Anaxagoras had said that Intelligence was the cause of all, and he thought that Anaxagoras would tell how everything was arranged for the useful and the best design—how the physical was for the moral: and how disappointed he felt when he found that no use was made of Intelligence—that ether, water, and other things equally absurd were made the cause of all—the physical made to explain

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\* *Tim.* 48. a.

† *Tim.* 68. e.

‡ 97 c. 99 d.

the moral and the intelligent, and no account taken of the fair order of things."

In short, with Socrates and Plato, the *ethical* view—the order and end of the universe—predominates. They find ideas a place in the creation—find *thought in things*. Here Teleology is born. There is nothing much better, even in modern science, than these utterances of Socrates: \* "He who in the beginning made man gave him ears to hear, eyes to see, nostrils to smell, tongue for taste, eyebrows and eyelashes to protect the eye, light of day to distinguish objects, divisions of day and night, nourishment from the earth, water, fire, and air. The gods love and cherish man, watch over him as their greatest care." † "He who orders and governs the universe, in which are united all beauty and all good, and who, for our use, keeps the universe in eternal vigor and youth . . . this god is seen accomplishing the most sublime works, but abides unseen in the government of the world." ‡

The sense of this is, that when we ask, What is the world (or universe) for?—the question is not and can not be answered by propounding any mere mathematical, mechanical, or physical end or object: for if

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\* I do not find that the masters in modern physical research, with all their advantages, are yet qualified, either by the quantity or quality of their brains, or by their culture, to sneer at Socrates, to cast aside Plato as a "poet," or to patronize Aristotle by misunderstanding him. Many of these men are as far from Socrates and Plato—as far from Cicero and Seneca—even from Buddha and Zoroaster, as they are from Moses and the prophets and the apostles of Christ.

† Memorab. I., iv. § 5.

‡ Ibid., IV., iii. § 13.

this were all, there would not be and could not be any man, any intelligent moral agent, or any God but Fate.

Merely physical agencies can never evolve a moral being and a moral-end. But these latter are found *in fact*, say Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.\* The world is made "for good." Hence, besides Necessity, there must also be Reason, Intelligence—leading to some moral end—in the authorship (origination) of the world itself.

*This was the impregnable and victorious position of the old Greek wisdom against the old Greek materialism.* And when this is said the essential thing is said, the main point is gained. For, if a man be a moral being with moral ends, there must be in the First Cause—not power alone and mathematics—but Will directed by wisdom.†

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\* Lange (Hist. Materialism) knows too much to put Aristotle on the other side, as some English lecturers have done, though he puts Democritus and Lucretius above Plato and Aristotle.

† In Lange's *History of Materialism*, this form of philosophy is traced through all history; its counterparts are exhibited, but the Materialism is represented as preeminent. Thus:—I. *Ancient world*: Democritus, Empedocles (ethical), Aristippus; the Idealistic reaction: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle; subsequently, theoretical Materialism carried farther by Epicurus and Lucretius.<sup>a</sup> II. *Medieval*. Mohammedanism more favorable to Materialism (Averroes) than Christianity was. Scholasticism. Bruno, Bacon, Descartes. III. *Seventeenth*

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<sup>a</sup> There was a debate between Origen and Celsus as to Man's place in Nature: Celsus advocating self-transformation in matter, saying that man is not the end of creation, that God cares for and punishes brutes, that elephants have moral qualities, signs of speech and knowledge of the divine. Origen admits spontaneous generation, as the work of God. See Aug. Kind, *Teleologie und Naturalismus*, in d. alt. Chr. Ztschft., Jena, 1875.

As the question of Evolution now confronts us, we must recollect the difficulties of the subject in the general mind of the age. The Christian Faith, the simple Biblical Faith, is here assailed. The whole of modern German metaphysics, philosophy in its widest speculation—abroad and at home—is in array against Faith. In this country, the most powerful intellectual and investigating tendency of the time is against us, including multitudes of the young men in all the colleges and professions.\* The question is: Is there as much evidence of the literal inspiration of the Scriptures as of the results of philosophical and scientific investigations? We have to meet that. We must be wary of our grounds.† We learn of the past: *e. g.* of astronomy, geology. In evolution, we must concede—and appropriate—all that is proved true, as we have often done before. Those hurt the good cause who stoutly maintain the unbending literality of their own interpretation of the sacred text, and anathematize all who will not repeat their formulæ. There are some who, if a Christian utters the word evolution, accuse him of playing into the hands of the infidel and the atheist. Those Evolutionists who are not Christians just want Christians to say that *all* evolution undermines the

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*Century.* Gassendi's History, Bayle, Newton; Locke, Toland. IV. *Eighteenth Century.* English and French basis. Priestley, Bayle, Diderot, Robinet, de la Mettrie, d'Holbach, Cabanis. Reaction in Leibnitz and Wolf. V. Then *general.* Feuerbach, Moleschutz, etc., to the present, where we have Czolbe and Häckel advocating a doctrine of "ensouled atoms."

\*—"tua res agitur cum proximus ardet."

† It is easy to argue with believers; the business is with unbelievers.



Bible, and that *every* form of Darwinism is Atheism. But, to say that species are entirely arbitrary, that there is no sort of physical connection or descent between them, is to advance a purely scientific, not a religious or Christian, theory. There are three theories of Evolution. (1) The *Materialistic*. (2) The *Pantheistic*.\* (These two may be combined. What is to be marked in respect to both, or to the two combined is—their insufficiency as regards (a) motive power, (b) organizing power—mind.) (3) The *Theistic* and *Christian*. This contains all of fact and truth which is found in the others, and supplies their defects, in the recognition of a personal, conscious intelligence.

We are not to deny continuity of growth, as far as shown. We are to consider that it is *not shown* at the great joints and crises,† that is—

Between atoms and primordial forces,  
Between life and mechanics,  
Between the soul and the vegetable,  
Between man and the animal.

But, even at these crises we are not to deny the *use* of the antecedent in the new. “The Lord God

\* “One part of the Christian world worships a Jew, another, a Jewess,” and it might be added that the modern pantheistic world celebrates in another Jew, Spinoza, the worship of genius.

† The Scientific Doctrine of Continuity, by Professor Leebody, Brit. and For. Ev. Rev., October, 1876, advocates continuity, “with three exceptions: (1) eternity of matter, (2) life, (3) man’s place,” etc. But, the exceptions prove that the principle of continuity is not enough to explain things, without a higher power, at crises: and why not recognize such higher power all along, like sap from tap-root to cone?

formed man out of the *dust of the ground.*" We are to assert that—

All the mechanical laws are in vital products—and something more,

All the vegetable in animal products—and more,

All the animal in man—and more,

All of man in history—and more.

And the question is: Whence and what this *More?*

We are to urge that mathematical demonstration is great in its way, but that that is a narrow way: it deals with few attributes, masses, numbers, motions, planetary orbs—all very well in their place, all grand in a sense, but comparatively barren and meagre. To say that this is the highest knowledge, and the highest way of knowing is perfectly absurd.\* Things that cannot be weighed and measured and chemically worked up—are immensely more valuable and interesting. A scrap of life, a speck of sensation, a mote of vision is worth more individually than all that mathematics and mechanics ever did or can do! If the sun could see and feel, it would be worth something; † if it could only see itself, if it only knew that it was burning up for our comfort, it would be immeasurably advanced in the scale of being.

We may wonder that the world should be led by such a pretense of wisdom as the theories of the day exhibit, ‡ but we are none the less to consider that it

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\* "Philosophy, which leaned on Heaven before,  
Sinks to her second cause—and is no more."

Concluding lines of *The Dunciad.*

† Intrinsically, *i. e.*, would be an "end in itself" and not a mere means.

‡ "Quantilla sapientia homines regnantur."—*Oxenstiern.*

is thus led and influenced, and that the interests at stake are most vital.

It is true that such ponderous platitudes were never used to cover a more superficial system (*e. g.* Spencer's definition: "Homogeneous becomes heterogeneous—differentiates," etc.), that we have here mere hollow phrases to express an empty law. But it is also true that these high, dim, shining abstractions and glittering generalities, harmless and distant as they may seem, and much as we may deride them or gaze with blank wonder, have an immense practical power. They are meant to give us the code of the universe, the laws of being, the seeds of all life and growth, the organic principle of nature and the spirit, to remodel laws and institutions, to shape philosophies, to build the state after new patterns, to reshape social law and order, society and life, the family, the state, the church.

The difficulty as well as the importance of the discussion arises from the fact that it is border-lands which are now the fields of conflict—the border-lands between mind and matter, between force and life (and life is a *form of force*), between the vegetable and animal kingdoms. Hence also the strife is between materialism and spiritualism, atheism and theism, science and philosophy, and philosophy and faith.\*

The discussion may be conducted in the following order:

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\* "There is a border-land between philosophy and science. The questions raised by science are answered by philosophy." See T. K. Becker, *Die Grenze zwischen Phil. u. exact. Wissensch.* Berlin, 1876.

After I. The Introductory and General Considerations.

II. The Metaphysical Background assumed for Evolution.\*

III. The Scientific Achievement.†

IV. The Bearing on Theology. The Adjustments between Evolution and Theology in general. (This on the supposition that there is a view of Evolution which (a) grants design and (b) is theistic.)

V. The Bearing on Scripture. Evolution and the Bible. (Raising the questions (a) of geology, (b) of the order of creation.)

It should be added that the subsoil of all the hypotheses with which we have to deal is in the old question: Is the universe to be viewed *sub specie mundi*, or, *sub specie æternitatis*? Are we *e. g.* to bound our view of all organisms with "the four organogens," carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen? This is the battle of Armageddon, and here we encounter the Anti-Christ.

## II.

### THE METAPHYSICAL BACKGROUND.

It used to be considered something of a task to make a world; most people pondering the subject, have gladly taken refuge in mystery and omnipotence.‡ But now almost everybody fresh from the

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\* The strength of Evolution thus far is in the metaphysical theory which it advocates, and not in its inductions.

† This has not met the metaphysical assumptions even half way.

‡ Fichte was a notable exception.

retorts can tell us, if not how it *is* done, at any rate how it must be done if done at all.\* This, at least, the investigator has ascertained: that if he had been present at the upspringing of life in the world, he would have seen with his mortal vision, mechanical forces becoming vital—and still remaining mechanical; life appearing and really being nothing new—no life there, in fact. The substance of the reason given for this confident assertion respecting the origin of life is that as we approximate to “protoplasm” in our experiments, we can see no difference between it as mere material, subject only to chemical and mechanical laws, and as “vitalized” or endowed with the laws of life. But, having no instrument to detect the difference, why should we expect to see it? The intimation is that the difference is infinitely small, is equal almost to zero. But here the “infinitely small” becomes the infinitely great. Every thinker would rather know the heart of a molecule than know all astronomy. In the little, the unseen, the *invisibilia*, the mystery of creation slumbers. The theorist says, “If I had been there I should have expected to see the mechanical-chemical change into the living.” But with what instrument of vision? How would he “see” an atom ensouled, or, perchance, a mechanical law changed into a living force? He would only see some of the atoms differently arranged and showing new properties, viz.: a live-centre, a sac, a cell wriggling about, thrusting dead atoms out of the way,

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\* “He had first matter seen undrest  
And took her naked, all alone,  
Before one ray of form was on.”—*Hudibras*.

using them, feeding, disgorging, fighting, using the organs of nutrition and assimilation, finally reproducing something just like itself and giving up its imperceptible ghost.

This could be seen, *and nothing else* : the existence of a new being, with new properties and functions, and its little life then expiring. But it would never be *seen* that mechanics and chemistry did this. It would be seen only that they were there, but under new conditions. Even if no new principle of life be admitted, the new conditions, *which cannot be derived from physics and mechanics*; must be.\* Aristotle says: ἐν τοῖς εἶδεσιν, τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς, τὰ νοητά ἐστὶ. In sense is intellect. The investigator of protoplasm does not "see" the mechanical and chemical powers of matter, otherwise than with the mind; he needs only the mind to "see" life when it arises; †

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\* Spencer, First Princ. 192, says : "The *sole* truth which transcends experience by underlying it is thus the persistence of force. To this an ultimate analysis brings us down, and on this a rational synthesis must be built up." Again, p. 195, "Uniformity of Nature" is only "persistence of relations among forces." Tyndall, Frag. Sc. 110, declares that "no matter how subtle a natural phenomenon may be, whether we view it in the region of sense, or follow it in that of the imagination, it is in the long run reducible to *mechanical laws*." Yet he says (Belfast address—see *N. Englander*, Oct. 1876) : "To explain evolution without creation must radically change our notions of matter." "Taught, as we have been, to regard these definitions" (which give us its purely physical and mechanical properties), "as complete, we rightly reject the notion that out of such materials any form of life could possibly arise." So Du Bois Raymond : "It is a mistake to see in the first introduction of life on the earth anything supernatural, or indeed anything more than an extremely difficult problem in mechanics."

† "Copernicus had no telescope."

*i. e.* to discern that entirely distinct phenomena have presented themselves, for which the mind—the organ of vision in the case—demands a distinct cause or source.\*

It is the position of our antagonists that Force is all. But this very word, Force, connotes, not a phenomenon, but its *cause*. The phenomenon is discerned only through and by *motion*; and this motion again is never discerned—and no man can define it, except by a paradox—something which both is not, and is. So true it is that the roots of phenomena are in the noumena—of the unintelligible in that which is discerned only by Intelligence, an Idea of Reason.

Moreover, by every law of psychology, of logic, and of philosophy, Mind is what we know nearest, most and best. All else is comparatively inaccessible. The thing-in-itself, the substance which we know, and alone directly is—*Mind*.

Let it be considered how much a materialistic evolutionist must take for granted: He has space and time, with no beginning nor end. In them, atoms, † practically infinite; yet space and time could not generate atoms, nor atoms space and time. Force is the movement of atoms, yet the force can-

\* The law of this vision is: *Respice, Aspice, Prospice*. Look from phenomenon to cause, view phenomenon as caused, grasp the future effect in the present cause.

† They show us an atom, and say, the fair world was built of such—and it may in part be true—just as true as that the Parthenon was built of blocks of marble, or that a brick is a specimen of a house; but something more is needed—and the best part, too.

not be deduced from atoms, nor atoms from force, nor either from space and time. Then the atoms and forces, in space and time, must form all the planetary systems, *proprio motu*—according to the laws of mathematics!

In fine, the metaphysical assumptions may be briefly stated from the work of Lange. There is no thing-in-itself, only phenomena: of which the human organization is the centre: all is found here (even Causality, II., p. 45); Ethics is Egoism—and sympathy (not absolute); Religion is the impulse to the unknown and unknowable *ideal*; in man there are realistic and idealistic *Triebe*. The Ideal is seen in Art, Religion, Philosophy. Art is confessedly only ideal: Philosophy will always have a place in human thought: only we must not confound its imaginations with realities! Religion\* is sifted until naught is left: it remains only as an aspiration. He doubts whether Christianity can survive, if myths are given up: one of these myths is the idea of God. Yet he speaks of the hold which religion has against all arguments,† and would *not* give up the sacrificial death of the Son of God—of course, in his sense.‡

It seems necessary then only to state the question in its *breadth*. Does man, does this our world, revolve around God—or does God (all the God there is) revolve around man? Is man everything and God perchance nothing? Is man's knowledge § all, and

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\* II. 547, 8.

† II. 495.

‡ II. 528.

§ Atheism, on its intellectual side, is simply the shallowest system of philosophy that the mind of man can possibly devise. It is made up of the two hardest, driest notions: Atoms, Force: out of those all.



is there no omniscience? Is man's faith all a delusion, and has no voice, no Incarnate Word, pierced the darkness of the night, and taught man the lessons of eternal wisdom? Are all the questions of man's nature and destiny to be dismissed with the sarcasm of "human knowledge?" Have the race been lunatics, and have we just found it out? Is Theology a set of opinions, Natural Theology an exploded series of hypotheses, Conscience the bugbear of childhood, Man the head of the animal kingdom, Force—unconscious and with no object—that which works its will in the heavens above and the earth beneath, and the waters under the earth? Is Sin a name for ignorance—Redemption a process of matter—Christ an ideal—God equal to zero—and Eternal Life a fiction of a dreaming brain?\*

The contrasts should be presented:

Theism—or Force and Casualty,†

Theism—or Nihilism and Nescience.

If Theism and Creation receive their recognition, then the Supernatural is recognized: the *miracle* of creation is admitted: an omnipresent Deity: first and second causes, all along the line.

There will be given as the result—Natural Theology.

That given: then so deep and perplexing are the problems, the disorders, the evils, the riddles, the

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\* Any and all the differences between the Greek, the Latin, and the Reformed churches are slight, compared with those between the whole of Christianity and the whole of Skepticism.

† Casualty explains nothing; it is a name for our ignorance—for caprice.

sphinxes,\* the hidden and revealed God, the God we find in nature alone, and the God whom we are formed to adore—that the cry must be for a REVELATION. †

We are to assert, then, against all vain assumptions, the true Metaphysical Background : the reality of the Supernatural :—that which is above and before the whole complex of natural finite phenomena, especially such phenomena as are subject to the senses. That there is such a mode of being, viz., which is infinite, eternal, causal, yea incomprehensible—is attested by reason, and conceded by modern science. Reason asserts itself in asserting it : denies itself in denying it. You may say—not *known* ; but it is known in its effects—for all we know in experience we know radically as *effect*.

Or, to adopt the common division :

The *Ontological (a priori)* argument—gives Ultimate Being, with its universal and absolute attributes—in distinction from above and before, the changing and finite.

\* Bacon sees in Œdipus and the Sphinx, the allegory of science : every man, every race has his enigma to decipher. And how eternally indifferent is the sphinx.

† The modern doctrine of God may be thus summed up :

God has been, is, and will be ;  
 God is that which is—pure absolute Being ;  
 God is Transcendent, and also Immanent ;  
 God is the Real—ens realissimum.

God is the Ideal, ever to *be*, to be realized, and never so !

This is the latest position : that of Lange, Tyndall, Huxley, Renan, etc. This makes God the product of pure imagination. The concessions, however (as against the old atheism), are noteworthy : The Ideal *is*—is necessary to man—is ever to *be*.

The *Cosmological* :—on the idea of cause (admitted by Mill, etc.)—that the finite and changeable has its ground and cause in the infinite and absolute Being. (The language of modern philosophy—all forces are from and of one absolute force.)

The *Teleological* :—on the idea of design :—that in the finite world there are adaptations, designs, everywhere. Hence the causal power which produces (“evolves”) the finite and changeable must be rational—*i. e.* conscious spirit.

### III.

#### THE SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT.

From estimating this all but professed scientists are solemnly warned off. It used to be said by church inquisitors, scientific men must not touch the Bible; now, the tables being turned, the cry is: Believers in the Bible must not say anything about science: it is so high that they cannot attain to it.\* The cry will not deter any thoughtful man from forming his own conclusion as to the actual achievements of science, and distinguishing between proof and the intimations of what certain ardent minds regard as the possibility of proof. Science has its honors and glories

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\* Are there not some zealous evolutionists who are not zealous scientists; who accept all the theories on mere authority, and are as unable as the “divines” are supposed to be, to read the facts? “Physicists,” says Beale (*Phys. Life*, p. 436), “without having studied the wonderful effects wrought by vitality, have tried hard to represent it as a slave of force, but it has proved and will ever prove its master.”

which are well deserved. It has its martyrs, too. As with love—nothing unto it is common, nothing unclean. It has its matins, its vespers, and its vigils: it lights its fires while others sleep. Its strength is in facts and inductions. Its weakness is in metaphysics and in morals. Where it is weakest it is most apt to boast. Science, by itself, unchecked is and must needs be of aristocratic tendency—must give birth to a class who say, in an arrogant, dictatorial spirit, “Stand by, for I know more than thou.” (*E. g.*, Renan in his Dialogues.) Science is not directly *duty* or *love*, especially if it goes back into Force and Forces—merely physical—of which morals and religion are vanishing forms, like waves, like leaves, like the flowers, like a song.

The proposition to be maintained against materialistic evolution is—that nothing which science has as yet *established* contravenes, invalidates, or hardly even touches the doctrine of Creation—none of its evidence; the arguments for creation are just as strong and good (in some respects stronger, *e. g.*, Design and Adequate Causality), as ever, and no established scientific principle or fact is in their way.

The concessions of materialistic evolutionists may be adverted to. Lange says, “How the external nerve movement gives rise to the internal [contents of sense] is wholly inexplicable.”\* “How unity of physical image is gained out of the variety of elements is also wholly inexplicable.”† Yet “all must be physiological.”‡

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\* *Hist’y Mater’m.* II., 375. † *Ibid.*, II., 418. ‡ *Ibid.*, II., 369.

Evolution needs to establish the essential oneness of the movement in mechanical (and chemical) and "vital" combinations, and this by "spontaneous generation." It is confessed that here nothing has been achieved.

It is necessary for evolution to show the essential identification of Reason and Instinct, of the Spiritual and the Animal, and to show how instinct arises on its theory of life. But here nothing has been accomplished. There is an extreme tenuity in the experiments and suppositions of the advocates of "uniformity,"\* reminding one of Webster's words (Dartmouth College Case, p. 280, Farrar's Report): "But this is only another instance of that habit of supposing extreme cases, and then of reasoning from them, which is the constant refuge of those who have to defend a cause which upon its merits is indefensible." All that has been suggested turns upon a misapplication of the notion of *habit*. Habit only means, that as a creature is, so it does. It gives no account of the *is*, nor of the *to-be*, but only says the *is* becomes the *to-be*. *Habitus* from *habeo*. It is purely a statement of facts in a general form.† In every case the instinct which is propagated must at first have *somewhere been original*. Lemoine (L'Habitude et L'Instinct, Paris, 1875,—an able work) says (as Aristotle said), "Habit is second nature." But what led to

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\* The term which Lewes prefers.

† So, in Psychology, *Association of Ideas* is merely a phrase for an orderly series of facts. It is no law and embodies no principle. It is not even a generalization, but only a general statement of a sum of particulars.

the first acts which became habit? Instinct. The habit presupposes instinct. The common definition of Instinct stands; it has been well given by Bain: "an aptitude—not acquired—to do all sorts of acts, especially those necessary or useful to the individual" [better: "to the species"].

Nothing has been achieved by instituting a false analogy between development in the moral and in the physical spheres. In both nature and history there is doubtless a law of development, a process of growth, a progress toward some end. But there is also a marked difference between the two. In nature, considered as comprising the material elements and structure of the globe, and its vegetable and animal forces and forms, the developing process (so far as we know) has spent its productive energies, so that no new species or genera of vegetable or animal life are any longer brought into being. Thus the development we speak of in nature is of a plan already completed, and perpetually repeated. The existing forces and forms may be combined and applied by human skill: but so far as nature itself is concerned, nothing new is engendered out of the hiding-places of its power.

But development in history, in the history of the human race, is something different and higher. No new species or races are brought into being, but the race as a whole, under the guidance of Divine Providence, is moving on, subduing nature to its use, and taking on new forms of social, political, æsthetic, and even moral and religious life. Even here there are not, strictly speaking, any new elements or forces, or

even ideas, but there are larger and more diversified applications of the old, so as to form new conditions and phases of human life, and introduce a higher order of society. In this consists human progress—towards an end not yet realized, and to be reached by successive stages and stadia.

One of the marked differences in these two orders of development (which we may call the natural and moral, or the physical and human) is, that in the former, or the natural growth, everything proceeds under the dominion and law of a fixed sequence or necessity, while in the latter the element is that of moral freedom. In the former there is no real progress, because there is no possibility of education: in the latter, it is a constant process of education. In the one there is only the life and death of successive individuals: in the other there is the instinct of immortality, the vital consciousness that the capacities with which man is endowed are susceptible of an indefinite range and development.

So far is it from being true, as some physicists affirm, that there is progress only in the sphere of the natural sciences, and none at all in the sphere of morals—that, on the contrary, taken strictly, there is no real and continuous process of development (but only repetition) in nature, while in the moral, intellectual and religious history of mankind there is real and perpetual advance towards some higher end not yet attained.

The suggestion that vital synthesis is simply the “reversal” of chemical analysis carries no weight. Tyndall (*Vitality*, p. 463) says, “every particle of

every animal body may be reduced to purely inorganic matter. A perfect reversal of this process of reduction would carry us from the inorganic to the organic, and such a reversal is at least conceivable." Dr. Elam rightly calls this\* "a most marvelous conception," and asks if the same would be true of a manuscript burned to ashes. How can there be a transition, in the nature of the case, between the not living and the living? The living can become *not* living, but the converse cannot be. Tyndall says,† Trace back line of life "to those organisms which I have compared to drops of oil, suspended in alcohol and water. We reach the protogenes of Häckel, in which we have a type distinguishable from a fragment of albumen, only by its finely granulated character." The reply is just: Life is new, totally different from chemical action.‡ "If it is a chemistry, it is a chemistry unknown in our laboratories: producing effects exactly the reverse of most of the chemistry with which we are acquainted."

It need, perhaps, only be added, that the bold attempt of evolutionists to suggest a scheme of world-origination fails to present a self-coherent speculation. (See F. Plitt, *Entstehung der Welt- u. Naturgesetze*, 1876, 37 pp. Cf. Hertling, *Die Grenzen d. mechanische Naturerk'g.*, in *Theol. und Lit. Zt'g.*, No. 19, 1876.) Suppose (on the Kantian-LaPlace view) the original gas, infinite in extent. How could it be set going by known powers? Not by outside press-

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\* *Cont. Rev.*, Oct., 1876. p. 739.

† *Frag. Sc.* 524.

‡ *Cont. Rev.*, Oct., 1876, p. 740.



ure, for there is no outside to the infinite. Not by gravitation, for all is equal and balanced. Not by chemical affinities—for all is infinite thin gas—dissociated. Not through lower temperature, for where could the escaped heat go? So there would be a limit at the first end. There would be another at the last end. The ether, retarding all and lessening the tangential force, would cause all, at last, to roll together. So, too, the gradual loss of heat would bring all to an end. There would be a general tendency to rest and indifference.

## IV.

## THE BEARING ON THEOLOGY.

It is striking how Infidelity plays into the hands of Orthodoxy. For example, the new positions on Heredity, asserting a common descent, laws of transmitted qualities and liabilities, character, etc., point directly to the great Christian doctrine of Original Sin. The extreme views of individualism are thrust back by the new doctrines. Then, too, Innate Ideas come round again. Force, power, law, are asserted, in the physical sense chiefly, it is true, but they cannot be confined to that sense, when once evoked. Moreover, while unbelievers used to know all about God, now it is declared that He is incomprehensible of essence.

The proposition can be maintained, that modern science, so far from setting aside the ultimate question which philosophy propounds and Christianity answers, has in fact made them *grander than ever*.

Never did the Universe (so far as known) so much demand the knowledge of God. The points will become more numerous on which the new science defers to the old theology. Heredity, as we have seen, is obliged to open new ground for reverence of the doctrine of Original Sin; Pessimism emphasizes the truth that the race is under a moral condemnation; Indestructibility is a shadow of the doctrine of Immortality; Evolution paves the way for the view of Man's higher destiny; the doctrine that the end of the world must come, and that by fire, finds new illustration in our latest science.

The movement (progress) of Theology and the movement of Thought go on together. They are not separate, in different planes or tangents, not even parallel, but interlocked. There is one centre for both—God: and one circumference—the universe. Even their conflicts ultimately result in the adjustment of boundaries. We must have philosophy, science, and religion—these three, but the greatest is, and ever will be, Religion. And in fact materialism is now busier about the *religious question* than about any other. Lange and Tyndall divide all truth and reality for us into two parts—*empirical* and *ideal*. Lange concedes that the ideal is the highest, which it certainly is. We *use* the results of the empirical for ideal ends, virtue, beauty, thought. Then, this deserves more, is worth more, is needed more. Both are impulses in us. We *may* pursue one as well as the other. But it is said, the one is *merely ideal*, viz., Religion. How so? Religion is not only internal, but has its *historical* truths and facts—to be investi-

gated, criticised, but not denied—any more than empirical facts.

In respect to the great ultimate ideas of Force and Cause a remarkable advance by modern scientists is to be noted. All the great naturalists now agree on two points: (1) The universality of the law of cause and effect, (2) That this is to be traced to an Ultimate Force—the source (cause) of all phenomenal forces and changes. Cause is viewed not as mere antecedent or sum of antecedents, but as Force—and this ultimately one. This clears up a good deal of ground. For example, *1st.* Any given effect is—all its antecedents (and only these) in another form. Whatever is in the effect must then pre-exist—there is nothing absolutely new: *e. g.* Wisdom, intelligence, etc., must be in the antecedents. *2d.* A First Cause is conceded, *i. e.* the Infinite, Real, Unknowable Force. Men cannot then ask any longer, What is the cause of God? without also asking, What is the cause of the Absolute Force? An absolute ground, basis, beginning, is conceded.

Finally, it comes more clearly to view, that the common ground for all theories is in the *facts* of man's evil, misery, sin. Christianity did not make these facts: the denial of Christianity will not remedy them. Christianity recognizes original sin—as a fact—to be fought against, and has fought against it, to overcome the dread consequences of the great apostasy. Its doctrines are not sad nor debasing, as the materialistic and pantheistic positions are. These lead to Pessimism, Christianity to Optimism of the highest kind.

## V.

## THE BEARING ON SCRIPTURE.

[Only the following is found upon this point. The paragraph appears to be the statement with which the author intended to close his course of lectures.]

One thing is certain—that Infidel Science will rout everything excepting thorough-going Christian Orthodoxy. All the flabby theories, and the molluscous formations, and the intermediate purgatories of speculation will go by the board. The fight will be between a stiff, thorough-going Orthodoxy, and a stiff, thorough-going Infidelity. It will be, *e. g.* Augustine or Comte, Anthanasius or Hegel, Luther or Schopenhauer, J. S. Mill or John Calvin. Arianism gets the fire from both sides: so does Arminianism: so does Universalism.

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EDITED BY HIS WIFE.

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